

# MASSACHUSETTS QUARTERLY REVIEW.

NO. XII.—SEPTEMBER, 1850.

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## ART. I.—SENATORIAL OPINIONS ON THE RIGHT OF PETITION.

THE right of petition, as it was secured by the American people in the constitution, and as they still understand it, they should hold very dear. Indeed, to permit unrebuked its repeated violation, especially if no effort be made to reëstablish the right, and make it more widely known and better appreciated, amounts to a virtual surrender of it. If we mistake not, such a course can be shown to lead to an entire prostration of the spirit of the government; and if this sentiment be not gathered from the remarks that follow, the writer will widely have missed one of his chief aims.

The governments of the old world have, generally, been founded by the superior energy of a few; and those who administer them have been supposed to possess *independent* rights — rights inconsistent with the welfare of the people. The ignorance in which the latter were kept — their not knowing what was due to them, frequently induced an acknowledgment, on their part, that these pretensions were well founded. The frequent revolutions in Europe, particularly of late, have arisen from the pressure of these pretensions, on what the people believed to be their own rights; and, both parties thinking that they were right, the controversy becomes very sanguinary. The preservation of the form by which power was secured to the rulers, was to them, so far as government was concerned, the chief interest; and, as grievances were thought to be felt, first of all, by them, it was supposed that they would redress them. Government being deemed superior to the people, its acts were mainly for those concerned in carrying it on; if the people were incidentally benefited, so much the better. In

these governments — even in the least illiberal of them — there was some restriction, if it did not amount to an entire prohibition, of the assembling of the people, and of their petitioning for a redress of grievances. This, if it does not prevail up to this time,\* prevailed to a great extent at the time our constitution was made.

But, in the formation of our government, besides the changes that were made in many other things, elsewhere deemed indispensable, this relation of the government and the people was to be completely reversed. Here, the scabbard was not to be more important than the sword it protected. The people were to be superior to the government which they formed. They were to be viewed as making the government solely for their own convenience and benefit, and as delegating to others their power to administer it. Indeed, they were looked on so much as the substance of all government, that it was formally acknowledged they had the right to change the form of it whenever they chose. The people were considered as the soul — those who administer the government, as the body ; the first may always live ; the last may die, or give place to something better. This delegation by the people, made those, to whom they entrusted their rights, generally honorable ; and, as they never wish any thing done for them without fully paying for it, they gave their delegates, themselves, the right to say, what the honest discharge of their duties was worth, — empowering them at the same time to take the amount from the treasury, as they earned it ; but they never intended their delegates, as such, to acquire any powers or rights separate from those of the people.

It is quite clear that the people of this country meant to do something in regard to the right of petition ; something they had not done before ; something, perhaps, which had never been done before. The Turkish Sultan, we are told, rarely goes abroad, even to take an airing, without having multitudes of petitions presented to him. They are all received with great complaisance, and, as he has the power of taking life at his discretion, they are, no doubt, respectfully worded. But they relate, we suppose, to private or individual griefs, re-

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\* The writer was told in 1840, by an intelligent Frenchman, then directly from Paris, and having his residence in that city, that large popular meetings could not be held in France, without the permission of the government first obtained. Probably, the late meeting of the Peace Society in Paris, verified this, notwithstanding the change in the government.

quiring no act of ordinary legislation, for no such act is performed there, to redress or alleviate them; and they very probably have but slight connection, if any, with what we understand as "grievances." Grievances, no doubt, include individual cases, but we commonly mean by them that more than one, indeed that a good many, are affected or endangered; that they can be removed or lightened by an act of legislation, such as Congress is competent to pass, and that the public interest will be somewhat retarded or hindered, should they not be redressed. Now, to say that Congress, the very body to be addressed, have the authority to determine what petitions shall be addressed to them, is, in effect, to say that nothing, at least, to any purpose, has been done — for a congress could do this before the Revolution. They could always have had petitions, such as they would choose to receive, relating to topics on which they might wish to legislate. But to do this was plainly only permitted to the people. They had no Right. If there was any right in the matter, Congress had it. But we have just seen that to secure the right to Congress, would, really, have been doing nothing — and there is the constitutional provision, which we are not to suppose was inserted for no purpose. If, then, it was put in for some purpose, and if it was unnecessary for Congress, and if there is only one other party, we are driven to conclude, if language do not totally contradict us, that it was meant for the other party — THE PEOPLE.

It ought, also, to be borne in mind that, after the convention had formed the constitution, and closed their labors; after having inserted into that instrument all they thought necessary, and submitted it to the people for their ratification, this omission was regarded as so material that it was not only made a part of the constitution, but, ultimately, the first amendment or addition to it. The foregoing consideration shows that, in popular estimation at least, this right, though necessarily, at first, a minority right — as we expect to show in the progress of these remarks more at large — was considered of great value.

That the people thought they had secured it — indeed, that they did as well they could — there can be no doubt. But has it not practically fared with this right, as it has with most others where "every body's business is nobody's?" While men slept, under the belief that there was no danger, their servants, the legislative powers, have been more wakeful and eager to take it from them. Has this right — there being no one

especially appointed to guard it, and give the alarm on its invasion — never been cloven down ? Has it not indeed been so repeatedly cloven down, without popular rebuke, or remonstrance, or even uneasiness, that it is now denied by the very persons to whom the petition was to be sent as a guide to their proceedings, by their superiors ? To be more explicit on this subject of right, and that there may be no misunderstanding of it : My ancestors have purchased, for unquestioned consideration, of him who had authority equally unquestioned to sell, a right of way, to be used, at all times, by their descendants, at their discretion, free from all molestation by the seller, or any claiming under him. Now, if the latter disturb me in the exercise of my right, and I submit to the disturbance quietly, taking no measures whatever, not only to be compensated for the wrong already done, but for the more certain establishment of my right in future — the *right* is gone ; my pusillanimity has emboldened the trespasser, and converted the right into a mere indulgence, at his discretion, and not mine.

We would not make the impression that Congress *intended* to deprive the people of a right, and that they covertly directed their conduct to this end, designing to appropriate it to themselves. Although, it is supposed, they did not intend to do this, it has been done as effectually as if they did. Whilst we would not charge them with such a fraudulent purpose, it is by no means an uncommon consequence of their situation, if they be not carefully watched. Most of us, perhaps a large majority, are actuated by the principle of exalting the class to which we belong, or in which we have the highest interest. From this, and, as it appears to us, from no other cause, can the dishonest action of classes be at all accounted for, or satisfactorily reconciled, with individual honesty, and the almost unbounded control that some callings exercise over the minds of men. Pascal and Tillotson were too pious and sagacious not to discover the many corruptions of the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, with which they were respectively connected, yet scarcely any two persons have contributed more to their advancement. Most well-educated Englishmen, too, think that monarchy is the best form for a political and social structure ; they are in favor of a nobility, who are born legislators ; as also of making different orders in society, by law. They are pleased, under any circumstances, to meet with one of sentiments similar to their

own, but still more, if they find him in the midst of republicans. They then think that he is the germ of an order that will before long spring up around him, and that the truth, as they view it, is permanent, and has not, in him at least, been diluted by surrounding falsehood. The republican, on the other hand, thinks that his is the only reasonable political or social organization ; and, if we come nearer home, we shall find that the parties into which the country is, for the most part, divided, are equally anxious for the exaltation of themselves at the expense of all who oppose them ; and that this exaltation is the more desirable, in proportion as the degradation of their opponents is deep — as they have departed from principles considered true, and as they, themselves, have undivided possession of the field. Thus we may examine all men closely connected with party, and we shall find — however widely they may differ as to the ultimate objects of their respective crafts — that they agree in this, with but rare exceptions, that they desire the exaltation of the class which includes them all, or of the one in which they are most conspicuous, and in which they have the greatest interest.\*

We do not mean to be understood that, in all this time, there was no one in Congress true enough to himself and to the people to sound the alarm. To undervalue the efforts that were made to maintain this right would be unjust, not only to those who were then in Congress — some of them are there still — but to the late John Q. Adams, their able and experienced guide. But their admonitions, given as plainly, as extensively, and as loudly as they well could be, fell on those who could not be aroused by them, or who thought that

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\* The following anecdote so well illustrates the practical surrender of a right by doing nothing to prevent it, that it ought not to be withheld : "A journeyman tailor, new in the shop where he had just then been employed, took his place with the rest on the counter, saying he had forgotten to bring any wax with him. He politely applied to his next neighbor for the temporary use of his. With similar politeness the wax was handed to him. The next day he again brought none, and, on the wax that he had been permitted to use being out of the way, he asked for the wax. The third day, being in want of it, he asked, in rather a rough, uncivil tone, for *his* wax." This may have been the case, substantially, with the right of petition. Congress may have exercised it, at first, thinking that their independent acting would save their constituents a great deal of trouble, and that the people would certainly approve of what they were about to do. The first instance passing without rebuke, the next time they may have been bolder, more confident ; till, at last, finding their assumptions unresisted, perhaps unquestioned, that at all events it was but the right of the *minority*, they now demand *their* wax.

public affairs were in the main sufficiently well-conducted, or that it was not their place to be meddling in such matters.

As we assume that the right of petition, as inserted into the constitution, is a popular right, that has never been transferred, even if it could be, and that there is no limitation to it, only what the petitioners in their discretion may affix, we ought to be prepared to answer all questions that fairly relate to the subject.

We are met at the threshold by several cases that seem, at first sight, to militate against our rule, or to be exceptions to it; but further consideration shows they are not. "What," one is ready to say, "are Congress bound to receive all petitions, even such as are disrespectful and insulting to the body to which they are addressed? and, as we know, words in themselves, may be civil and respectful, but that they may be made to cover a subject offensive to those to whom they are addressed, and that the petitioners may ask Congress to do what they have no authority to do — shall all these, manifestly improper and wrong, be received?" We say, yes. As a sample, let us consider the petition lately presented to the Senate, by Mr. Hale, one of its members, for the dissolution of the Union. With very few exceptions, it seems greatly to have raised the patriotic fervor of the Senators; but had our rule been observed, this sudden outbreak of feeling would have been needless, the people would have been better satisfied, and Congress, never perhaps again would have had a petition for such an object presented to them. We take extreme cases, not only because they are comparatively rare, but because they more completely and prominently test the principle.

One of the first things, perhaps the very first, to be asked is, What ought to be the design of the Senate? Unquestionably it ought to be, probably is, to prevent the repetition of such petitions. It certainly does contribute much to the harmony and unity of a community, and therefore it is quite desirable, that the legislative power, theoretically the servants of the people, should have the confidence, and indeed the love of those who employ them, and who honor them by that employment, and that *they* should feel similar sentiments in return. But to get mad at the petitioners, and call them hard names, does not seem, in the smallest degree, to advance the object we have ascribed to them. Indeed, the tendency is in the opposite way; for the petitioners, entirely apart from their design, may have made it very manifest that the Senate is

composed of material that, for the most part, is incapable of standing a heavy blow. There are but few, if any, who can be angry, and reject the guidance of reason, without doing some foolish thing, if they act at all. But the Senate, to which we now more particularly refer, say, that the excitement of abolition petitions not only pervades the country, but that they feel, among themselves, the leaven strongly at work. We had thought, but it may have been in our simplicity, that the Senators were elected for their good and well-established characters ; that, unlike the younger part of the community, they were not surprised into sudden and violent excitements ; and that, in them, "the heyday of the blood is tame, is humble, and waits upon the judgment." We had supposed that this was the main reason why, to be eligible, they must be at least six years older than a member of the House. That the Senate observes the forms of civility better than the House, we have no more doubt than that it is a much smaller body, and that it is generally thought, as to dignity, it is somewhat superior to it.\* Considering the members as competent witnesses, the Senate not only exceeds all other bodies in the propriety and thoroughness of its investigations and discussions, but it is the most dignified deliberative assembly anywhere to be found.

This is the theory of the Senate, no matter how much it may have been departed from, or how great may have been the excitement by which it has suffered itself to be borne away.

If the object of the Senate be to put a stop to such petitions, and if the opinions and experience of the writer be of any account, the smoothest and speediest way to success is respectfully to answer such as have been received, and let all that come be received, read, and answered in the same good spirit. Let the Senate show that they are really worthy of the government they help to administer ; that they are republicans ; that, while they would be just to all men, they have, besides this, a kind feeling towards their countrymen ; that the best, but if the word please better, the most conservative tie of society is for the most learned and favored to instruct the most ignorant and uninformed, and that the Senators have too high an opinion of their own true honor, to be ingenious in spying out an insult where none was intended. They ought also to

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\* [This paper was written before Mr. Foote had proved that the Senate of the United States could exhibit as disgraceful scenes as ever took place in the House. Our contributor wrote only historically, not in a spirit of prophecy.  
—ED.]

know that the people, although they may make mistakes in construing a constitution, now more than two generations old, do not mean to insult or offend those who are acting for them. In short, their characters should be so well established, their sincerity so unsuspected, that they would not return the abuse of a ruffian who might think to provoke it by assailing them in public. The people may not be as fastidious as the Senators are in addressing one another, and, certainly, the Senators sometimes carry this quality to a great extent, to one that seems almost incompatible with free deliberation, yet that they are much inclined to respect their agents, especially when they do not use their public stations to promote their private interests.

But, after all, suppose a petition is found to be almost as bad as it appears to be, but that there is some room for considering the insult doubtful, would it not be better for the Senate magnanimously to overlook what might be so interpreted, and treat the petitioners as intending nothing wrong in the way of giving offence? Let the Senate appoint a committee composed of men whose characters are advantageously known to the community; let this committee, as it would do, of course, deal with the petitioners (for a dissolution of the Union, we will suppose,) respectfully; for Americans, right or wrong, if we wish to win their confidence, must be treated respectfully, and not like slaves; let this committee answer the petition by sound, reliable arguments, by arguments proving that what it sought for was impolitic, unreasonable, and out of their power to grant, and show why it was so; and let this committee not forget also to show that, as governments were made to be perpetual, they make no provision for their dissolution. If, we say again, this petition had been so treated, probably another one for the same object would never again have been presented. At all events, there would have been a good opportunity of giving to the country some wholesome truths, which it may begin to need; the Senate would have been saved a great deal of ill-feeling, of unbecoming language, of self-disrespect; the mass of the people would have been gratified, and the petitioners themselves, in all probability, would have looked on their petition as weak and indefensible. But the opportunity of doing or of abstaining from doing the things just mentioned, is lost. If the Senate desired to do what would most effectually bring good people to compare the benefits of the Union with its disadvantages, they

have done it. They have also convinced many that, as a body, *they* are not what they were thought to be ; that they are excitable, quick to do wrong, but slow to do right.

But, suppose the intention to insult Congress be so palpable that it cannot be mistaken, and that all the measures we have recommended fail ; or, that Congress, thinking differently from us, and that ours is too inefficient a way to obtain their end — or that, in such cases, a little *spunk* ought to be shown, as a cur sometimes snarls at his master — what, then, is to be done ? Receive and read them, by all means, unless they be in the unknown tongue, or contain a farrago of nonsense. If they should not be read, and reading implies reception, it will not be known what is in them. It would be vain, now, to trust to what a Senator might say of them ; for, if he did not like them, he might say they were disrespectful, that they ought not, on that account, to be received ; or he might even go as far as Senator Sturgeon went, send them back, unrepresented, to the petitioners. Senator Sturgeon's mode, one which was very highly commended by several of the senatorial speakers, is certainly a very effectual one, one that deserves a patent right, if any does, for relieving himself and the Senate from petitions which they do not like, and for finally putting down the right of petition altogether. Quite a happy conceit this of Senator Sturgeon's, to say nothing of its pleasantness !

If any new truth should be found in the petitions, let it be added to our stock ; for there are times, probably, in all men's lives, when they care but little about the quarter whence truth comes. It has almost become a proverb, that nothing forbids us from telling the truth laughing, nor do we see why it should not be told in a different frame of mind. If, then, after reading the petitions, nothing be found in them but well-known and familiar truths, mixed up with much falsehood, lay them on the table, or consign them to the proper committee, who, of course, will not answer them. The design of the petitioners, then, now quite apparent, is not to have a grievance redressed, but to offer an insult. They use the outside form of a good thing, but they put a bad purpose within, a box which ordinarily contains a jewel, but now some loathsome carcass. This was not so intended. The people never once supposed that any persons would wish to affront, in the discharge of their duties, those who represent them ; and they all, with the exception of the petitioners, of course, may properly be considered

as joining in a counter petition. One is obliged to receive good coin, because it is a lawful tender in discharge of a debt; but good coin may be so badly imitated, and what is offered so obviously spurious, that we risk nothing in refusing it.

We have insisted, and we still do, that, in every case, it should be made as certain as it can be, that an affront, or insult, was intended. Our remarks here have a more special reference to one covered up under smooth and deceitful words. If an insult was intended, it should be of the Senate as a whole, and not a part of it only—for this part may be concerned, and deeply concerned, in the grievance sought to be redressed. For instance, how can slavery be removed, and why should the people of the Free States be disturbed by it, unless they be permitted to show that to enslave men is a sin; that sin is a reproach to any people; that slavery is a contradiction of our declarations, often repeated, and still persisted in; that it is inherently base and unjust, and that it is in violation of the laws of God, to which we all owe obedience. To do this, would certainly be no affront to the Senate, however unpalatable it be to some of those Senators who are engaged in making their fellow-creatures work for nothing, in putting a stop to the improvement and growth of those noble faculties with which our common Father has endowed his family, and who think a public good can always be made to flow from individual wrong. What is untrue can be easily overthrown, and falsehood can be fully exposed where reason is left free to combat it. So far from giving offence, if the prayer of the petition be true, it ought to be welcomed; for what is so dear as knowledge which removes but a single obstacle to eternal life, and all knowledge can be made to contribute to this end—as that knowledge which makes immortality even a little clearer to us? If the rule insisted on in the Senate prevail, all that a Senator has to do—and only to *suppose* such a thing of a Senator, when one of their own number speaks of their “corruption, intrigue, and low management,” cannot be much out of place—is, to implicate himself in some grievance sought to be redressed. The petition, to be sure, would not be very palatable to him; very likely, he would call it “disrespectful,” and it would be cast aside of course.

Nor ought it ever to be forgotten, that this right was secured to the *minority*. This consideration, it might be supposed, would make a just Congress more ready to acknowledge

the right, and more careful how they encroached on it ; but it seems to have had a contrary effect. No one, who is strictly honest, knows when he may be in the minority, though he may have been a long time on the other side. The subject of almost every petition, perhaps of all, must at first be a petition of the minority ; consequently, not popular ; for those that are popular will be legislated on without any petition. The subject of the petition — now submitted to the intelligence and impartiality of the legislature, to whom the “ general welfare ” of the country has been entrusted — if reasonable, and beyond doubt well fitted to advance the nation on its march toward improvement and civilization, and provided there be nothing in the way, ought, at once, to be granted. But, suppose Congress do not think so well of it as I have said, but yet think favorably ; a report from such a body, setting forth its excellences and defects, would be more widely circulated and have greater influence than any other notice. Thus a petition, although it be not granted at the time, may be made the means of publication on a large scale ; and, by bringing in other minds to bear on the same subject, error may be removed, and it be made to contribute, most usefully, to the interests of the country. The benefits of steam-power and the cotton-gin we believe are unquestioned ; but who supposes they would have attained even their present state, or would ever go beyond it, if the public mind, or those at all inclined that way, had not been and were not still employed on those discoveries ?

Take another example — the better, because it is new and just before us : Suppose Mr. Clay’s “ compromise resolutions,” as they are called, were thought in the Senate, under whose consideration they now are, to be so completely adapted to the object designed that they would pass that body with great unanimity. But suppose there are other persons, whose perceptions of moral subjects are clearer and much more distinct than Mr. Clay’s, and that they are fully persuaded that the slaves are human beings ; that they are members of God’s family on earth, and that when we enslave them we enslave our brethren ; that one part of the human family were not born to be the slaves, the articles of merchandise of another part ; but that they are entitled, equally with others, to the use of their powers, of every kind. Suppose that these persons think that the holding of slaves, as they are now held, is often for the brutal gratification of furious passions ; that it is *always* an instance of the rankest oppression ; so rank, indeed,

that, according to the prevailing notion of the whites, it would justify them in any attempt which they might make for their liberty, nay, render it imperative on them; and that slavery, especially in a country professing to be the freest in the world, is a grievance that ought at once to be redressed and removed. Suppose that these persons also believe that, in all countries where mind is unclogged, as it is, for the most part, in the Free States, advances, both moral and physical, towards improvement and civilization are made with a rapidity proportioned to its freeness; and that the real question now is, Shall those States be hindered in their upward progress, as they heretofore have been, by dragging slavery along with them—for where slavery is, mind, except on a few subjects, and they generally connected by the slaveholders with the enslavement of their fellow-creatures, is comparatively inactive—or shall they put it out of the way? Suppose these men should think that the present state of things is, in a great measure, to be ascribed to the fact that the body or mass of the people occupy a more elevated moral position than they ever did before; but that, with their more rapid and higher advancement, slavery is incompatible; that they wish to undeceive the slaveholders, because they are their brethren, and warn them to prepare for the going-out of their “system;” for it will be in vain for them to look for the present agitation to cease, whilst slavery lasts, and as long as there are persons who fear God more than man. Suppose, too, they further think that, to compromise a moral question, however it may suit active political partisans, who never had any thing to do in the matter, with *such* persons, and in this country, is utterly out of the power of any man, however great his gifts, or however experienced he may be in compromises. And suppose they should think it as bad in Mr. Clay as an attempt to make us all of one religious belief—and that he might as well try to make us all Roman Catholics or Protestants, as to persuade us to hate slavery less than we do now; as a thing contrary to our national professions, to the spirit of a free government, to nature, to right, and, of course, to the laws of God?\*

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\* The attempt to establish Episcopacy in Scotland was made by Charles the Second, under very favorable circumstances. The Court had great influence, and Charles made a bishop of Leighton, who was educated at Edinburgh, and was one of the most persuasive and eloquent of the Presbyterian divines. But the unsuccessful issue of the attempt, under such circumstances, and when greater weight too was attached to forms than now is—for we want something more substantial than *forms*—ought to deter any one from a similar attempt in this country and at this time.

The writer is not aware that these, or any such sentiments, have, at any time, been uttered in the Senate; but he thinks human ingenuity could not contrive a wiser plan for giving them an extensive circulation, than by embodying them in a petition, and having it read there. The Senators could hear them—through them, the slaveholders would know them—and some, who had not yet invested their means, might learn that, to claim property in MAN, is a "guilty phantasy," that cannot be undisturbed, among a people advancing in civilization and Christianity.\*

In the foregoing remarks we have endeavored to prove that the right of petition is secured as a *popular* right to the minority, whoever may compose it; that it has been encroached on by Congress, till, at length, it is openly denied and taken away from the people; and to give reasons why it should be at once again resumed. It remains for us to show more minutely than we have yet done, and we promise to do it as concisely as we can, from the speeches delivered in the Senate, what a weak and mistaken view they have of this right in that body.

From our remark we would except the very small minority, Messrs. Chase, Hale, and Seward, the only Senators who voted for the reception of the petition deemed so obnoxious. These gentlemen did not vote thus because their regard for the Union was less than that of other Senators who took this opportunity of sounding their own patriotism very loudly, but because they understood the matter, and wished to preserve the right, so far as they could, for those to whom it belonged. But, notwithstanding Mr. Seward's excellent speech against the extension of slavery, a speech which we will not attempt to characterize, lest we use too laudatory terms, we yet have to make a complaint against him for calling the petitioners "madmen." The word "madmen" does not even insinuate

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\* Slaveholding is discussed in the Senate, not as a moral question, but purely as a political one. It is maintained that a territory about to become a *State*, or that a State already such, has, at any time, a right to enslave part of the people who are now in it, or who may come into it; that there is no more moral character attached to the act of enslaving our fellow-man, than there is to the act of an individual who removes a chair from one side of a room to the other, as may best suit his taste or convenience. But we apprehend, when we feel more intensely the calamities which never fail to attend slavery, and which thicken as it grows older, its moral character will be completely vindicated. We shall then learn, too, though perhaps too late, how unphilosophical, how unwise it is to violate any of God's laws with regard to the treatment of any of his children, our fellow-creatures, and not expect their vindication.

an argument to the reason, or an appeal to any of the juster and nobler feelings. Its tendency, indeed, is to inflame. It was gently rebuked by Mr. Chase, so was Mr. Sturgeon's application of "black-hearted," to abolitionists; though Mr. Chase may have been thought mainly to refer to Senator Douglass, of Illinois, from whom we do not look for things as favorable to liberty as we do from Mr. Seward.

The love of the Union by the petitioners ought not to be so much measured by the petition, as their dislike of slavery. They may love the Union very much, so the slaveholders say they do; but, whatever they may say about State degradation, inequality, &c., &c., they love slavery, power, absolute power over their fellow-men, more than they love the Union. If they can use the Union for the continuance and protection, including the propagation of slavery, they will love it; but their love for the Union will be inferior to their love of slavery, inasmuch as the thing protected stands higher in their esteem than the mere means of protection. The petitioners—let it be admitted for argument sake—dislike slavery more than they love the Union; so much so, indeed, that, sooner than give up their dislike, they stand ready to give up the Union. The slaveholders say that, so great is their love for slavery, sooner than give it up, they are ready to give up the Union. One wishes to use the Union for the destruction of slavery, the other for its protection. The only real difference then is, that one party dislikes slavery, and the opposite party loves it, and that the dislike and love of the same object is stronger than their love of the Union. The marvel, then, is, that the advocates of liberty for *all*, should be called fanatics and enemies of the Union, whilst the slaveholders and perpetrators of oppression are denominated its friends and supporters. Our readers can well judge which of the two is the more reasonable, and to be preferred.\*

But let us take a view of this question from another point: Suppose the petitioners, believing to be true what they had heard from the slaveholding Senators and others, that the Union was now virtually dissolved, but not believing with Gen-

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\*The debate referred to above, shows how little attention our Senators had given to the matter in hand, and how little they understood it; for Mr. Douglass, certainly not the least learned of these learned gentlemen, says: "It is time we begin to investigate this question of the right of petition." It would have been well, too, if they had *finished* their investigations before they acted.

eral Cass—or, at least, with the same confidence that he does—when he says that he who thinks the Union can be dissolved without bloodshed is already “in an insane hospital, or ought to be placed there,” but that war may be averted by prudent counsels, are they not rather to be commended than condemned for wishing to bring about a *formal* dissolution “peaceably?”\* It seems to us they are, and that they are nearer right than General Cass, who, being a military man, thinks nothing can be well settled without fighting about it. We will not go over the line that separates us to fight *them*, and they *can not* come over it to fight us. And, if we should be so foolish as to fight at all, what should we fight about? The slaveholders wish to use the government for the advancement of slavery; the Free States, of liberty. They could not have things their own way, and therefore they have gone from us. This is all we see to fight about, General Cass to the contrary, notwithstanding.

We will not say that cause of quarrel may not be found by the slaveholders; for they will always complain, even when they get the lion’s share, in any division of property or power that might take place; though we see none in the bare fact of dissolution, which, we trust, if it ever come, will be entirely voluntary, on the part of the Free States. But in any event, notwithstanding the “bloodshed and conflagration,” scented by General Cass as closely following dissolution, the conquest of the slaveholders—for all who were not slaveholders would abandon them—would be an easy matter to the Free States. If the latter wished to raise an army, one of the most formidable kind, accustomed, too, to the climate, could easily be raised.

If the Union is always to bring on us such slaveholding rule as we have had, almost without intermission, for the last fifty years; if the Union is for confirming, promoting, and extending slavery, at the expense of liberty, we say, so far as we are concerned, let it disappear, it does not deserve to be upheld by any honest and just man, and the sooner it is dis-

\* Allowing full faith to the evidence of Senators, the country, so far as regards the Union, was never more stable;—so much so, indeed, that, if we may be permitted to compare such things with natural objects, the rock of Gibraltar is not more so. How ludicrous, then, must any one appear, who is always going about, stripped as it were to the buff, and warning others that, although they might fasten the heaviest weights to the rock, they must not, at any time, take it away with them, for that he has constituted himself the special guardian of it, to see that it is always in its right place.

solved and forgotten the better. We would run the risk of making another constitution, from which slavery would certainly be excluded, rather than use the present one, managed as it is. In fine, we would place ourselves in the category of Mr. Seward's "madmen."

The first and most direct assault on the right of petition — at least, the first we shall notice, and, perhaps, the very first — was made in the House, in 1836, by Pinckney's resolutions. Several others, having the same end in view, the exclusion of all petitions in the slightest manner relating to slavery, were made before December, 1845, when, on the motion of John Quincy Adams, who, from the first, was openly, indeed, vehemently opposed to any infringement of this right, every obstacle to its fullest exercise was removed.

The direct attempt on this right contained in Mr. Calhoun's notorious bill for authorizing post-masters to prevent incendiary or anti-slavery publications being sent to the South by mail, failed in the Senate, but the indirect mode by which petitions were kept from being read was quite effectual. We have the account of it confirmed by Senator Dayton, from New Jersey, for the seven years he had been in the Senate, from Mr. Douglass, in these words: "I had understood it to be the uniform practice of the Senate, for the last twenty years, as long as the agitation of slavery had prevailed on the floor of Congress, to lay the motion to receive petitions on the subject on the table," — amounting, as Mr. Seward tells us, to "a virtual rejection." Mr. Douglass further says: "Understanding this to be the uniform practice of the Senate, I have adhered to and acquiesced in the practice in the votes which I have given. I am not aware of one instance, in which a petition relating to the slavery agitation coming from the North has been received." \*

Here, for twelve or fourteen years, the Senate, by its practice, "its uniform practice," had trampled on a constitutional right which the people had secured to a minority, on *one* subject, — and that subject, no matter how disparagingly the slaveholders, or their "natural allies," both Whig and Democratic, at the North, may speak of it, certainly the most important question of the times, as the adjudication of human

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\* Mr. Douglass wished to apply the same rule of exclusion to all petitions relating to slavery, whether they were from the North or South.

rights must ever be. We wish to present this so clearly that we may not have to ask Mr. Douglass's opinion, as a lawyer, accustomed to examine and unravel intricate subjects, but only to appeal to his common sense. Suppose the Senate had thought proper to institute a practice, we care but little how "uniform" it was, of refusing to receive all petitions except such as were agreeable to them: would not the right of petition have then been taken away from the people? And yet we see not why, with the same propriety, they might not have interdicted all, as to have interdicted two classes of them, the petitions relating to slavery, and those relating to a dissolution of the Union.

Mr. Douglass finally voted for not receiving the petition about which he had been talking. But as he gives the reasons, we will insert them in his own words:—

"But, sir, there seems to be a sentiment prevailing among many, that all petitions are to be received here, and the prayer considered, and that the refusal to do it is a violation of the right of petition. I recognize the right of the people to petition to the fullest extent. I have given no vote that invades or restrains the doctrine of the right of every citizen to petition. I hold, however, that the right of petition only extends so far as the right exists to grant the prayer of the petitioner. If every man has the right to petition on every subject, he must direct to that tribunal which has competent jurisdiction over the subject.

"But I will not go into a discussion of that branch of the subject. I hold further, that, under the constitution, the Senate has the right to dispose of all petitions in such manner as the Senate deem proper. The constitution provides, that we shall prescribe our own 'rules of proceeding'; and, sir, it is as competent to reject the prayer of the petition, on a motion to lay the question of reception on the table, as it is to vote down a bill before the Senate containing the prayer of the petition. It is only a question of expediency and propriety, how far we shall proceed in the different steps of legislation on petitions which shall be presented; and I am free to say, there are certain petitions which I am not willing to take up the time of the Senate in voting to receive, lay on the table, and refer to a committee; and of all the petitions that could be desired, the petition before us is one of that character. It is no less, sir, than a petition to dissolve the American Union. Sir, is this Senate under obligations to receive with respect, and consider propositions to dissolve the American Union? I hold not, sir: first, we have no power, under the constitution, to grant the prayer of the petition; secondly, if we had the power, it is moral

treason to give countenance and encouragement to the prayer of such a petition. For one, sir, I am utterly opposed to its reception. There is no right in the doctrine of petition that will authorize the citizens of this Republic, or any portion of them who are reckless enough to do so, to ask us to receive and hear the prayer of petitions for the dissolution of the American Union. I am glad we are to have a test question on this subject, to test whether all petitions, of every kind and description that madmen may choose to send to us, are to be received and acted upon by the Senate. I shall vote against the reception of petitions, not only upon this subject, but in relation to that whole class of subjects, the tendencies of which are to weaken the bonds of the American Union, or to result in its ultimate dissolution.

"Here, sir, you have the question directly presented, whether you will receive the petition to dissolve the Union. Upon the slavery question, this matter only comes up in its tendencies. Every man sees that this slavery agitation has but one tendency, and that tendency is to sever the Union forever. I shall vote against the reception of this petition to dissolve the Union, and I think the Senate ought to adhere to the good old practice of laying upon the table every petition, the direct and inevitable tendency of which is to lead us to the same result only by slower and more indirect steps."

One does not often see more errors crowded into a passage of the same length. There is but a single statement that will be likely to secure general acquiescence — universal, we were about to say — if the proper course had been taken with the petitioners ; and this is, that the Senate have no more constitutional power to dissolve the Union than any other similar number of men. If we deal with the position of Mr. Douglass more at length than we otherwise woul' and at the risk of being thought somewhat tautological, it will be mainly because his lead has been followed by his senatorial brethren ; so that an answer to him will be also an answer to them.

Nor do we often see a more remarkable instance of self-delusion ; for we are unable to perceive how, after the *fanfaronade* delivered by the senator — indeed, we may say senators — he could have thought (though we suppose that he did not *think* much about it) that he recognized, to the fullest extent, the right of the people to petition ; or that he had given no vote, when he had just told us that he had conformed to the "uniform practice" of the Senate, which invaded or restrained the doctrine of the right of every citizen to petition.

But Mr. Douglass, as it will be seen, is formal enough to throw his objections to a dissolution of the Union under two heads. When he says that the Senate have no power to grant the prayer of the petition,— with all due deference to the understanding of Mr. Douglass, who, no doubt, intended to make his remarks as decisively unfavorable to the petitioners as he could,— he has furnished us with an indisputable reason why they should be answered. It is by no means a violent presumption, but a sensible one; one by which a wise man ought always to be guided, that the petitioners would not ask the Senate to do what they knew the Senate had no power to do. To suppose our race honest and true, if we have no counter evidence, is certainly the best way to deal with them; for we can form some pretty correct notions how far honesty will go, and what direction it will take, while we can form none of how far knavery will go, or what direction it will take. Now, if the Senators had entertained toward their fellow-citizens that feeling, which is apt to make more intense the presumption referred to, they would have thought that the petitioners believed that what was said by some of the slaveholding members of Congress was true, that the Union was already virtually dissolved, and that they desired, as men ought, that the formal dissolution be unaccompanied with “bloodshed and conflagration,” and be “peaceable.” If any thing could have much flattered the Senate, it seems to me this would, that any number of their fellow-citizens had such confidence in them, that they supposed this unheard-of power had been entrusted to them! Now what could have been easier for the Senate than to have appointed a committee, who would have informed the petitioners, even if their object had been dissolution, how undesirable, nay, how impossible it was, and that there was no power in existence to accomplish their wishes!

The second proposition is, and in it many Senators concurred, that the Senate are exhorted to commit moral treason (an offence unknown to the laws) to destroy itself, to destroy the sovereign power, to set the constitution and their oath to support it at defiance, to commit perjury, &c., &c. General Cass goes farther still; he is for not even mentioning the word dissolution. He says:—

“I had occasion some time since, and under much less imposing circumstances than the present, to say we ought to have one unpronounceable word, as the Jews had, of old, and that word

'dissolution.' I repeat the sentiment, and with stronger conviction than ever of its truth and importance." \*

To the first part of the proposition it may be said, that the Senate is not exhorted to do any act bad or immoral in itself. Very true; its powers seem to be misconstrued; but it is not exhorted to destroy the sovereign power, that, by the acknowledgment of all, resides in the people; nor to commit moral treason, nor perjury, nor any crime or offence whatever. The petitioners ask them to do a particular thing, which they have no power, as Senators, to do. How easy, then, would it have been for the Senate — instead of getting mad, and pouring forth many unnecessary "grandiloquous patriotic outbursts" — to give this to the petitioners, as the reason why they could not do it. They might have added reasons why dissolution should not take place at all. The petitioners themselves would probably have been satisfied with them, and, even if they were not, others would.

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\* The value of the Union, its advantages over its disadvantages, neither so well understood in 1787 as now, led to it. We see no harm, but on the contrary benefit, resulting from a calculation of its value in the most comprehensive sense. The testimony, with the exception of the slaveholders, so far as we have seen it, is favorable. Indeed, Senator Cooper says Pennsylvania "knows the value of it." To dwell on the value of the Union, especially when the witnesses ascribe the blessings we enjoy to the Union, appears to us, so far from weakening, to strengthen it. Even General Cass seems to think as we do, judging from a speech he delivered in the Senate, March 14. "The more our institutions are investigated, the stronger will they become in the hearts of the people, who will continue to love the government which has given them a greater measure of prosperity than any other people ever enjoyed, and will support and defend it against all assaults." That the slaveholders should want to be out of it, as we trust things now are among the people, does not at all surprise us, for liberty, to all guiltless persons out of the "original" States, ought always to form some part, and a large part, of the value of the Union. Nor are we surprised at their wishing to carry with them the Southern States, and the non-slaveholders, a large majority, of the South. It is not intended to say, that the slaveholders, many of whom are very ignorant and easy to be imposed on, may not be influenced to a certain point by sectional feeling, by the cry of State rights, &c., &c.; but, when they see that they are to compose the rank and file of the armies which the gentlemen slaveholders are to command, and to risk their lives for slavery, and *against* those whom they most resemble, their ignorance excepted, and who wish to abolish a system, the cause of the depression of the whites, who, as non-slaveholders, live in the midst of it, they will recoil and regard the upholder of slavery as their most unchangeable foe. They will not only abandon him, and let him do his own fighting, but also persuade his slaves to leave him. Heretofore, they have felt some interest in slavery; for, besides being thought profitable, it introduced them into the higher ranks of society. Now they will see that they never can have any personal interest in it, that it is a waning system, just going out; for I consider it as certain as human things can be, that, if we *dissolve*, slavery goes out, and they, in all likelihood, will assist in putting it out.

As to General Cass's notion, that "dissolution" should be an "unpronounceable" word, as one was among the Jews, it deserves attention, not so much as proceeding from him, for the Senate have often heard things from him equally silly, but as being applauded by Mr. Webster, who has been considered, *par excellence*, as the great "expounder of the constitution." We differ altogether from General Cass. To have one word "unpronounceable" (unpronounced) among us, with our present intelligence and refinement, would be impracticable. What might have been done thousands of years ago among the Jews, a rude and unpolished people, can not be done now and in this country. If it should be considered impracticable, there is an end of the question. But, admitting that it were practicable, would it be a wise measure, and make the Union any stronger? We think not; for if it be wished to pronounce a word or sentiment now, let it be pronounceable. We can not tell whether any public matter is right or wrong, till it is inquired into and talked about. Indeed, our constitution says that the "freedom of speech" shall not be "abridged." The people of this country look on any matter suspiciously, unless it be a private one, that cannot be given to the winds. We talk so much that we have been called, perhaps not inaptly, a Logocracy. Notwithstanding this, and that everything, even our government, is managed by talk, is the name of Jehovah, probably the name alluded to by General Cass, less intelligently revered among us, than it was among the Jews? That they had good rulers, occasionally, is not disputed, but that they were in the main as much given to vice as the surrounding nations their whole history, particularly in later times, when it is better known to us, fully proves. But we will take another illustration, and it may be regarded as more complete, because we understand it better: The Roman Catholics prohibit the use of the Bible as a school-book, on the ground that too great familiarity with it, especially by the young, breeds contempt. The Protestants, on the other hand, wish to introduce it, denying what the Catholics say would be the effect of using it in common. They think that the stores of wisdom to be found in it can not be too well known, particularly in early life, and that its influence would be a happy one on all concerned. Now we would ask General Cass if the Bible, so common among the Protestants that it can be read by them at pleasure, so common that no one book is more so, is less esteemed among them than it is among the Catholics, with whom it is

comparatively locked up, confined to a few, and understood by still fewer. Truly, General Cass's notion about an "unpronounceable" word, and the Roman Catholic notion about the Bible, bring to our mind a line of one of Dryden's plays, and the extempore answer to it. In the play some one says —

"My wound is great, because it is so small."

It was at once replied, from the pit —

"Then 'twould be greater were there none at all."

But does not Mr. Douglass fall into a mistake when he supposes the Senate is under no obligations to treat with respect and consider propositions to dissolve the Union? Only a moment's consideration of the importance given to the subject *now*, would convince an uninformed or timid person that the Union was really in danger. It is on that account important, and, indeed, very important, that all the opinions expressed in favor of disunion, and made known, as these have been, to what was deemed the highest authority, should be calmly and well answered. A renewed violation of the constitutional right of petition, gives to the petitioners an additional reason for wishing the Union dissolved. Besides, any other view, one too common, we know, by which we do to others as they do to us, would put it into their power, no matter how great ruffians they might be, to make our manners for us. An individual, or even a deliberative body, has a great deal of self-respect to learn, when it forgets what is due to itself, and treats others, we care not how much their conduct may really deserve it, in a rude and uncivil manner. They who do this make themselves the sole judges of what is due to others, and never fail to treat themselves disrespectfully.

But does not Mr. Douglass fall into a still greater error than this; one, too, that we acknowledge we find it hard to reconcile with senatorial intelligence? He says to the Senate, because the constitution gives to that body the right to determine the rules of its proceeding, that, under the constitution, "the Senate has the right to dispose of all petitions as the Senate shall deem proper." That "it is only a question of expediency and propriety how far we [the Senate] shall proceed in the different steps of legislation on petitions which shall be presented." Now, we should have a more humble opinion of Mr. Douglass's talents, if we thought he believed it. It may do well enough for a Senate, as what will not, for a Senate where, with but few exceptions, they are all on one side, and,

what makes numbers very important, that side the wrong one. But can he suppose that the makers of the constitution, whom he professes so much to venerate, ever intended so foolish a thing as to make the "rules" of the Senate supersede the provisions of that instrument? that they ever intended those rules should be *above* the constitution? that, to receive a petition, or to reject it, would be substantially the same as passing or rejecting a bill which, perchance, might embody the prayer of the petition? If he can believe this, then may he believe that, with the Senate, the constitution is as nothing. It must be so, too, in his opinion, with the House, for they have the same power of determining the "rules of proceeding" that the Senate have. So, between them both, the constitution may be nullified by their "rules of proceeding." This opinion, as we have just said, may do for a prejudiced Senate, but, if Mr. Douglass is a lawyer, he would not risk a dollar's worth of property on it; and any client, with only a glimmering of common sense, would think he had a very bad cause, or that he had entrusted it to very incompetent hands, if it was to be supported by such arguments.\*

Suppose again, and it shall be the last of Mr. Douglass's strange positions we will take notice of, that a person having, as he considered it, a good cause of action, were, through mistake, to bring his suit in a court that had no power to give him the redress sought; and suppose that, when the mistake was found out, his case were to be dismissed with much rudeness, and he with all sorts of opprobrium, some of the older members of the bar making it an occasion of vilifying him and his motives, and some of the younger following their example—we leave it to Mr. Douglass to say whether such a court would not be called a tyrannical one, as tyrannical, perhaps, as any ever held by the notorious Jeffreys, and likely to share his fame, if not his fate.

We have now done with this subject, as far as Mr. Douglass is concerned; and if we are not much in the wrong, we have proved that he has shown himself to be an incompetent guard of the right of petition, and so faithless that he will stand by and not only let others, to whom it does not belong, take it

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\* The House of Representatives, or at least some of its members, took the position, years ago, that they were not violating the constitution, which only forbade them from passing any law, &c., &c., against the right of petition, whilst by their "rules" they excluded all petitions having the slightest relation to slavery. But, even there, this subterfuge was not encouraged.

away from his own immediate constituents, to whom it does belong, but he will himself assist them in doing so ; and also in appropriating it to the very body to be addressed, and of which the people of Illinois have made him a member. As far as we know, we have presented him in his true light, one in which this debate presents him, and one in which he would probably wish to appear. We have not forgotten that he is a Senator from a Free State, and that what he says may have more influence throughout the country than if it were said by a member from the South, where men are much excited, and where rights are imperfectly respected. In doing what we have done, we have wished to arouse the people to a just sense of the right in question, in the hope that they would resume and reestablish it.

We would now leave this matter entirely, did we not think it necessary to examine the rule by which Senator Underwood, of Kentucky, would dispose of petitions. As stated by Mr. Hale, in the *Weekly Intelligencer* of Feb. 16, it is this : "If a petition asks for action which has no reference to my person or property, I have no right to present it." That Mr. Underwood, with his clearness of mind when applied to a subject on which he is altogether impartial, should be content with a rule so superficially [obviously] imperfect, would be unaccountable, did we not know what an obscuring influence slavery exerts on the best powers. Its insufficiency was well exposed by Mr. Hale, when he mentioned the case of petitions to abolish the grog-ration in the navy ; for, according to the "rule," nobody would have a right to present a petition on this subject but those among whom grog-drinking prevailed. These would probably be the last to petition to do away that ration. Quakers, and all others opposed to it, would have no right to petition, because the grog-ration prevails only "*in the service,*" and it would be a presumption rather too "violent," that Quakers would ever become sailors "*in the service.*" In replying to these remarks, Mr. Underwood says, "I did not intend to restrict the right of petition to the point which the Senator supposes my language meant." Mr. Hale appears not to have seen or understood, neither do we, Mr. Underwood as really so changing his rule as to make it incontrovertibly include the case before them. Mr. Underwood, after "utterly" denying the right of petition "in a class of cases," gives this exemplification, " How can a law, either in this District or in any State in this confederacy, in reference to slav-

ery, operate on a citizen of New Hampshire, who may remain at home all his life? It is utterly impossible that it can operate on him." Whilst we readily acknowledge the very strong probability, indeed we may say the certainty, if he were white, that no law, or rather that no form of law, passed by any of the slaveholding States, or the District of Columbia, could reduce him or his family to slavery, yet, as Mr. Hale observed, "he may remove." It is true he may remove, but his determination to remove may have been so long delayed by the existence of slavery at the South, that all the benefits he promised himself from a removal may be lost to him. "When he does become a citizen of one of them," [the Slave States,] says Mr. Underwood, "I should be ready to hear him, but not until then."

"Have I a right," says Mr. Underwood, "to petition Great Britain for a law operating on her citizens? Will the gentleman say I have a right to petition a foreign country to regulate her domestic code in such a way that, when I choose to become a denizen, or a naturalized citizen, I may have the benefit of the laws I desired to have passed? I deny that I have such a right." So do we. But the illustration that seems so conclusive to Mr. Underwood is not so to us; indeed, it seems so far from being so, that it abounds in dissimilarities to the case in hand; dissimilarities, according to our judgment, so great as to make it altogether inapplicable. Florida, for instance, is not a "foreign country" to New Hampshire. Great Britain is. A citizen of New Hampshire, by removal to Florida, becomes a citizen of that State; he has not to renew his oath, if ever he took it, of a "denizen, or a naturalized citizen." He requires no law. If the slaveholder has the right to petition for the removal of slavery, so has his nearest neighbor, the non-slaveholder; because, as a nuisance, slavery makes his dwelling an unpleasant one; and, if they have the right, the inhabitant of New Hampshire can join them in the removal of a nuisance, or attempt it alone. The right of petition was not secured to the States, but to the people, wherever they may be. Our wonder is, not that Mr. Hale would break such a fly, but that he could find a wheel sufficiently small for it.

But, suppose the man does not "remove" from New Hampshire to Florida; and that the existence of slavery, the hopeless existence of it in the latter, as far as laws, and usages, and the constitution can make it so, prevents him;—is he not affected by slavery? May it not "operate on him"? It

certainly may, and even to his death. To our own knowledge, persons who were abolitionists, have been compelled, on account of their own health, or that of some other one very dear to them, to spend the most inclement months of the year in the stern climates of the East, instead of going and remaining, at much less expense and nearer home, in our Southern States where slavery prevailed. And does Mr. Underwood suppose that it ever was intended by our constitutional fathers — and them he seems to hold in much honor — that, in any part of the country, whether girt by friend or foe,

"A man mayn't speak the thing he will"?

Does he think that, for expressing his disapprobation of any system, or usage, or custom, he was to be looked on suspiciously, if not hanged on the nearest and most convenient tree? \* And is he not well aware that multitudes of his fellow-citizens dare not visit many parts of the South, for fear of their lives, simply because they are known to be of the opinion that slavery is wrong, and that they have so expressed themselves? and that no name, or reputation, or lawful business, or pledges of secrecy would save one from the furious decision of a mob, or the more deliberately unlawful acts of a legislature urging them on? Has he so soon forgotten the case of Mr. Hoar, deputed by Massachusetts to attend to things which nobody in the South could be got to attend to — that he was expelled from the State of South Carolina, by a mob, supported by an act of the legislature, calling on their governor to expel him? Or that of Mr. Hubbard, sent on a similar errand of mercy, from Massachusetts to Louisiana, who was compelled to fly for his life, from New Orleans, without transacting any of the humane business on which he was sent? Does he not well know, that the constitution — not of the confederacy — but of the United States, says, that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens of the several States?" That Mr. Hoar and Mr. Hubbard could remain as long as they chose in Charleston or New Orleans, and that they could not be expelled thence without

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\* Why do the emigrants from northern countries, with but few exceptions, pursuing a contrary course from what northern emigrants usually do, settle down in the Northern States, willing almost to endure hyperborean cold, sooner than become residents of Slave States? Having left one form of oppression, they are unwilling to encounter another. They avoid the sunny hills of the South, as if the leprosy were there. Let that be removed, and the South, with her many natural advantages over the North, would soon be filled up with a happy, industrious, and thriving population.

violating the constitution? And does not Mr. Underwood know, that no reparation has been offered by South Carolina, or Louisiana, or by the United States, whose constitution, to be sure, held out but secured no protection? Does he not know that colored sea-faring men, as soon as they arrive at Charleston, or at other cities of the slaveholding States, are, without crime, or even the allegation of crime, imprisoned at the cost of the captain of the vessel—in effect, at their own cost?\* Does he not know—as he might have heard if he was in his seat in the Senate when Senator Baldwin spoke—that, with regard to those men, the *habeas corpus* writ is prohibited, by a legislative act? thus repealing, or disregarding the provision in the United States constitution, which says it shall not be “suspended, unless when, in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety may require it”? And does he not know, that covenants or engagements may be so broken on one side, that the corresponding ones cease to have any obligatory force on the other? And will Mr. Underwood, well as he knows, for he has filled a high judicial station in his own State, say that only the wrong-doers in these cases shall petition, and that the injured parties must patiently wait their time for the “redress of grievances”?

We cannot offer our readers a better entertainment, in conclusion, than to show them how well the minority in the Senate understood their right of petition, and how manfully they attempted to support it, than to give their views as they presented them:—

MR. HALE said: “In regard to this petition, I see nothing irritating or insulting in it. We have to hear every day from the other side of the chamber very different language from this petition. It has nothing to do with any action in reference to slavery; it asks that Congress shall propose immediate measures for the peaceable dissolution of the Union. And let me say that if the argument set forth by the Senator from Georgia, [Mr. Dawson,] today, and by the Senator from Kentucky, [Mr. Underwood,] yesterday, is the rule by which the good people of the United States are to be measured, then the right of petition is not worth anything, for it amounts to nothing. Those Senators put it on

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\* Twelve or fifteen years ago, the *Artibonite*, a Haytien vessel, was driven into Charleston in distress. The crew were colored men of Hayti. They were sent to jail. The captain, who was also a Haytien, would have been sent to jail too, had he not been suffered to go at large, from the necessity of the case, to superintend repairs. This is the writer's recollection of the case. He speaks entirely from that.

the ground that I have no right to present a petition here for action upon a subject upon which Congress had no power to act. That is not my business — not at all. It is for the people to judge as to what they shall petition for, and when the time comes for action, then I have a right to judge what is the power of Congress to grant their prayer. The people who petition have the right to judge also whether Congress has a right to act, and then, when the subject is before us, we have the right to judge and decide of the propriety of the power to act," &c., &c.

MR. CHASE said: "I am one of those who believe that the right of petition belongs to the people, and that it is not within the constitutional power of this body, or of any other legislative body, to abridge that right. I do not think it becomes us to define the precise object to which a petition may be directed; but that, when petitions are presented here from the people, we, their representatives, are bound to receive those petitions, and if we think fit to decline answering their prayer, we are bound to assign our reasons for the refusal." . . . "It is for the people, to whom the right of petition belongs, to determine, for themselves, upon what occasion they will exercise it; and when they have determined and have exercised it, and their petitions are presented here, or in any other legislative body, they should be received. To refuse to receive them is, in my judgment, an infringement of that right." . . . "To stop short of this — to refuse to receive a petition — to say to the petitioners, you shall not be heard — is an invasion of their constitutional privilege. Sir, we cannot abridge that privilege by law; much less can we abridge it by mere usage or rule," &c.

MR. SEWARD: "I believe, sir, if there had never been any petitions *on the subject of slavery* rejected by Congress, there never would have been any petitions presented to Congress *for the dissolution of the Union*. I believe that, so long as we suffer those who are disunionists to maintain before the people a false issue on the right of petition, so long shall we have the right of petition abused and perverted for such purposes. And it is for that reason I should desire to receive this and all other petitions. The distinguished Senator from Michigan, [Mr. Cass,] has adverted to one or two cases, and asks, by way of parallel, whether we would receive petitions under such circumstances; as, for instance, a petition to declare there is no God? Well, sir, I have seen a question, very similar to that, broached, in my legislative experience. I have known large masses of the community agitated by an apprehension of a combination of church and state, growing out of an appointment of chaplains to legislative bodies. I have seen such petitions presented, and a great popular movement made, to compel the attention of the legislative body to the discussion of that question.

"The moment these petitions were received and elaborately discussed and decided upon, the agitation ceased. I remember also the presentation of petitions, very numerously signed, to legislative bodies, to prohibit the reading of the Bible in the common schools; and the question was raised, which was the wisest way to meet an agitation so injurious to the peace and morals of society. Some maintained that it was best to reject them, and others that it was best to receive them and give them an answer. They were received, referred, and an elaborate answer given them, and though that is more than ten years ago, no such petition was presented to the body afterwards. Now, sir, we shall never hear of petitions for the dissolution of the Union if we receive this, and give it that answer which is in the mouth as well as in the heart of every member of this body. It is a simple question whether we shall give these reasons. We are not above giving reasons to our fellow-men, not even above giving reasons for not dissolving the Union. George Washington was not above giving reasons why this Union should not be dissolved," &c.

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ART. II.—*United States Exploring Expedition, during the years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, under the Command of CHARLES WILKES, U. S. N. Geology. By JAMES D. DANA, A. M., Geologist of the Expedition, &c., &c., &c., with a Folio Atlas of twenty-one Plates. New York, &c. 1849. Fol.*

ARTICLE I—CORAL ISLANDS.

THE work to which we desire to call the attention of our readers in the following article, contains the results of the geological observations of the author while attached to the United States Exploring Expedition, under the command of Captain Wilkes. To Mr. Dana we are already indebted for the splendid and elaborate work on the zoophytes, which has excited universal admiration among scientific men. To these two works, which communicate to the world only a portion of the researches of the author while engaged on this Expedition, we look with the highest degree of satisfaction, as a noble contribution from this country to the treasures of scientific knowledge, and it is to such results that we would proudly point when called on by the grudging politician to

justify the comparatively small sum which this government bestows in encouraging the cause of science.

We need hardly apologize for devoting a few of our pages to the subject of Geology, at least to those branches of this science which have been especially illustrated in Mr. Dana's work, for we feel confident that the facts here given, and the theories by which they are linked together, are of so striking and beautiful a character as to enlist the attention of every thinking man, even if he be not a professional follower of science. Deeply interested ourselves in the subject, and aware of the important results which the investigation of other scientific observers had developed in those remote regions, visited by the Exploring Expedition, we had looked forward to the publication of this volume with great confidence, feeling assured that it would be a work of the greatest interest to the geologist. Now that we have read the book, we take pleasure in stating that we have not been disappointed in our most sanguine expectations, and, unless we are entirely mistaken in our estimate, both of the subject and of the author, we think that this work will insure to Mr. Dana as eminent a rank among geologists as he enjoys already among zoologists and mineralogists. If, in his investigations of the zoophytes, he has excited our admiration as an ingenious investigator, a faithful, industrious, and minute observer, he astonishes us in this volume by the comprehensiveness of his views, and his deep insight into those great operations of nature, the study of which require alike an acute and strong power of observation, and a truly philosophical mind.

These researches naturally embrace a wide field. From the nature of such an Expedition, and the very limited time allowed for observation in the different places, we can not of course expect more than a general outline of the principal features. But, even as such, they are of paramount importance, since they relate to countries of whose geological structure little or nothing definite was known: as, for instance, New Zealand, New South Wales, the Philippines, Deception Island, and, on this continent, the coasts of Chili, Peru, Terra del Fuego, Oregon, and California. As might be expected, these coasts and islands exhibit every variety of rocks, the study of which will greatly increase our knowledge of the extent of several geological formations. The descriptions are accompanied with several excellent maps, and numerous well-executed wood engravings. There is besides an Atlas

of plates, representing fossils mostly from the carboniferous series of New South Wales, with some tertiary fossils from the west coast of the American continent.

But above all it was the Pacific which afforded to Mr. Dana the richest field, as it had already furnished him the chief materials for his zoological researches; a noble field, indeed, if we consider that it includes more than sixty-two millions of square miles; exceeding, therefore, by ten millions of square miles, the area of all the continents and islands of the globe. About six hundred and seventy-five islands are scattered over this expanse of water. But though so numerous, the surface of the whole, exclusive of New Zealand, does not exceed eighty thousand square miles, or little more than New Zealand alone.

In point of beauty and variety of scenery, these Pacific archipelagoes equal, if they do not surpass, any other part of the world. This small area of land presents us with mountains fourteen thousand feet in height; volcanoes of unrivalled magnitude; peaks, crags, and gorges of Alpine boldness. And amid the wildness and grandeur of these scenes, many of which would well aid our conceptions of a world in ruin, the palm, the tree-fern, and other tropical productions flourish with singular luxuriance. Zoophytes, moreover, spread the sea-bottom near the shores with flowers, and form islands with groves of verdure above and coral gardens beneath the waters. There is no part of the world where rocks, waterfalls, and foliage are displayed in greater variety, or where the sublime and picturesque mingle in stranger combinations.

In a strictly geological sense, however, there is less variety among the islands of the Pacific than we might at first expect, considering the vast area embraced. It is not here that we are to look for a great diversity of formation. A flying trip through a single State, that of New York, for instance, would probably afford the means of making a much richer collection of minerals and fossils than would be obtained from hundreds of the Pacific islands. The great interest lies less in the monuments of remote geological periods, than in the operations of those great agencies of nature which have been the most active in the formation of our globe, the volcanoes on the one hand and the corals on the other.

We can hardly conceive of any thing more interesting than to witness the formation of continents and islands by the combined action of these two agents, so powerful in their effect

and so different in their manifestations as volcanoes and coral growth, the one convulsive and terrifying, the other quiet and incessant. Strange as it may appear, the volcanic activity, although more extensive and more powerful than anywhere else, is less efficient than the quiet and unceasing action of the vital force in those little marine animals which build the coral. "It is not a wonder," says an eminent naturalist, "which at first strikes the eye of the body, but rather, after reflection, the eye of reason. We feel surprised when travellers give accounts of the vast extent of certain ancient ruins; but how utterly insignificant are the greatest of these when compared to the pile of stone here accumulated by the work of various minute animals."

By far the greatest number of the islands of the Pacific are the result of this *combined action* of volcanoes and coral growth, although we may frequently recognize but one of these agencies. Yet, with a view to methodical arrangement, and in order to do justice to each of the agencies which have been active in the production of these archipelagoes, Mr. Dana divides the islands of the Pacific into three classes: 1. The *Coral Islands*. 2. The *Basaltic, or Igneous Islands*. 3. The *Continental Islands*, or those which partake of the same mixed geological character of the neighboring eastern continent.

The coral islands are said to cover an area of nineteen thousand square miles; but of this only one-eighth is dry land, the rest being, as we shall see hereafter, occupied by lagoons. They constitute several archipelagoes, the largest of which is that of the Taumotu Islands, north-east and east of the Society Islands. The whole number of islands in this group is eighty-two, and, except some smaller clusters, they are all of coral origin. Another archipelago, of like extent and character, is that of the Carolines, including ninety-four islands. Between these two large archipelagoes, various islands are scattered over the ocean; all of these, to the north of a line drawn from the Society Islands to Samoa and Rotuma, being of coral growth. Mr. Dana mentions, besides, a third archipelago, that of the Flinders Islands, between New Caledonia and New Holland, in which the islands north of the twenty-fifth degree of south latitude are believed to be entirely composed of coral.

The basaltic islands cover an area of sixteen thousand square miles. They are most striking, on account of the variety of their size and outlines. They may be seen of every shape, from a simple volcanic cone to broken mountain

heights with deep gorges and lofty peaks. At present, the number of active volcanoes is very small. The most conspicuous are those of Hawaii, in the Hawaian or Sandwich Islands, of Tafoa and Amargura in the Tongan group, two or three in the northern Ladrones, several in the New Hebrides, and one or two on the coast of New Britain. They must, however, have been much more numerous in former times, if, as it is probable, all the coral islands have a basaltic foundation. We might then count for each island at least one volcano, so that their number, not reckoning subordinate vents, could not have been less than a thousand.

Before we proceed to the examination of these different kinds of islands, we beg leave to call the attention of the reader for a moment to some features which seem to be common to all the archipelagoes of the Pacific, and thus to proceed from one general cause. It has been long since observed that the islands of the Pacific are not scattered at random, but form regular ranges. This disposition, early led to the idea that they might be nothing but the summits of mountain chains sunk below the level of the ocean. Even the old and eminent French geographer, Buache, speaks of submarine mountain chains. The same idea was dwelt upon with great stress by Malte Brun, the Danish geographer, but it was not until within the last few years that it was fully demonstrated by detailed observations. Indeed, it is conclusively shown, by the observations of the Exploring Expedition, that there is a system, in the arrangement of these islands, as regular as in the mountain heights of the continent, indicating ranges of elevation as grand and extensive as those of the continents themselves. Thus the Sandwich Islands stretch in a direct line to the north-west. The Marquesas also are mostly in a single range. The Tahitian group, the Tongan, New Hebrides, New Caledonia, the Soloman Islands, the Ladrones, &c., are all in distinctly linear groups. But, according to Mr. Dana, the lines are not necessarily straight; and he goes even so far as to assert that "an exactly straight line is nowhere to be found; not even in a single ridge of a chain. The peaks advance and retreat all along the line, and occasionally the mountains sweep around into some new direction, and then return again more or less nearly to their former course." Something similar occurs in many of our continental mountain chains, especially in the Alleghanies, and whoever has seen the beautiful, but unfortunately, as yet, unpublished geological map

of the Alleghanies, by the Professors Rogers, must be convinced that this curvilinear direction, far from being the exception, is, on the contrary, the rule, and therefore dependent upon the peculiar forces by which the mountain chains have been uplifted. This curvilinear disposition of the different groups and archipelagoes of the Pacific is illustrated on a map accompanying Mr. Dana's volume, in which all the islands are referred to five directions, representing as many grand submarine mountain chains or lines of elevation. By far the most prevailing trend, however, is the north-westerly, the islands stretching off, as it were, from the Asiatic continent, in a south-easterly direction. It is also pointed out, as a most remarkable fact, that these islands and archipelagoes, with few exceptions, are confined within the tropical circle; and, farther, that they occur partly at a certain distance on each side of the equator; whilst in the immediate vicinity of the equator there are very few islands, the surface of the ocean being unbroken by land for a distance of more than six thousand miles, between the Galapagos and the Carolines.

Mr. Dana has devoted the first and most extensive chapter of his volume to the description of the coral reefs and islands, and the structure and growth of the little animals (*zoophytes*) which produce them. As might be expected, this is one of the most interesting portions of the book, not only from the importance of the subject, in a zoological and geographical point of view, but also from its bearing on geology. It is a well-known fact that, in former geological ages, corals were not, as now, limited to the tropical seas. They are found in a fossil state scattered over the whole globe, even within the circumpolar regions. Whoever has looked at the blue slate and limestones of Cincinnati and the western part of New York, or has occasionally cast his eye upon the bluffs of hard and porous limestone along the Mississippi, must have noticed an abundance of corals among the fossil remains with which these rocks are filled. It is now pretty well ascertained that a large proportion of the limestone, all over the world, is made up of remains of animals, sometimes preserved in an almost perfect condition, at other times ground to powder and afterwards consolidated. It is also known that, of all marine animals, the corals have furnished the greatest part of the material of the rocky strata. An attempt to investigate the laws of the distribution, growth, and extent of the coral reefs in such a field

as the Pacific, is, therefore, a subject well deserving the attention of every lover of science.

Although the subject is not a new one, yet so extensive are the labors of the Exploring Expedition in this department, and so much light has been thrown by Mr. Dana upon the difficult question of the coral growth, and its relation to the changes of level of the ocean, that, in order to do justice, both to the subject and to the author, we shall limit ourselves in this article to that part of the book which treats of the coral reefs and their importance in geology. In a second article, we shall review that portion of Mr. Dana's book which treats of the volcanic agencies.

There is a common error in regard to the growth of corals, namely : that they are produced by the collective labor of the coral animal, in the same manner in which the bee constructs its comb or the ants their hillocks, by an instinct of construction, the results of which are adapted to a peculiar use. This is not the case, for in the coral growth we recognize nothing but the product of a secretion which, as Mr. Dana justly observes, is the first and most common power of living tissues. The polyp secretes its calcareous envelop just in the same manner as a clam or an oyster secretes its shell. Mr. Dana rejects, therefore, as unphilosophical, the term *polypary*, or *polypidam*, for the stony mass of the polypi, which have grown out from this mistaken view, and proposes to replace them by that of *corallum*.\*

As to the structure of the polyps we must refer the reader to the special work of our author on zoophytes, where the subject is thoroughly investigated. In as far as mere external form and coloring are concerned, it is suggested that a good idea of a polyp may be got from comparison with the garden aster.

"The aster consists of a tinted disk, bordered with one or more series of petals ; and, in exact analogy, the polyp flower, in its most common form, has a disk, often richly colored, fringed around with petal-like organs called tentacles. Below the disk, in contrast with the slender pedicel of the plant, there is a stout

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\* Whilst we agree with the author as to the impropriety of these terms, yet at the same time we think them too much connected by usage to admit of being removed from our nomenclature. Indeed, there would be no end to the reforms if we were to cancel all names which are unphilosophical either in their structure or in their application. The very name *polyp* should be cancelled, for it means an animal with many feet, and it is well known that it was first applied to the cuttle-fishes.

cylindrical pedicel, or body, often as broad as the disk itself, and usually not much larger, which contains the *stomach* and internal cavity of the polyp; and the mouth, which opens into the stomach, is placed at the centre of the disk. Here, then, the flower-animal and the garden-flower diverge in character—the difference being required by the different modes of nutrition in the two kingdoms of nature."

All species of polyps do not secrete lime or coral. As there are mollusks without a shell, for instance the slugs, so there are many polyps without a shell. The most conspicuous among them is the so-called Sea-Anemone, or *Actinia*, which may be seen in abundance attached to the logs at our wharves. Being more accessible to naturalists than any other polyp, they have been studied with more care, and have been made the type of one of the two great divisions in the class of polyps, the *Actinidæians*.\* Indeed, most of the coral polyps, although much smaller, correspond in structure to the Sea-Anemone, especially those large and beautifully sculptured white masses, like carved marble, which adorn our museums, (*Astrea*, *Meandrina*, *Madrepura*, &c.) Those which have a distinct internal axis, like the *Gorgonia* and the red coral, are less concerned in the construction of reefs.

In order to form a correct idea of the astonishing growth of corals, we must keep in mind that the polyps, as before stated, are plant-like animals, which spread and grow like shrubs. A bud starts from a parent branch, enlarges, and soon forms a branch equalling the parent in size. This is the commencement of a group, or *corallum*; the two branches continue in turn to bud, and we have only to imagine the parent and the new polyp to go on in the same proportion, to conceive how a large group, or *corallum*, may be formed in a short time, each polyp secreting its own calcareous sheath. When these sheaths remain isolated, they form branched coral like the *caryophyllia*, but, when adhering together, they form clusters, in the same way as we have branched and ball-shaped cactuses, yet it is not uncommon to see the clustered corals also form branches, as for instance the horn-shaped *madrepores*. The coral is generally secreted throughout the sides and at the base of the polyp, but sometimes a secretion takes

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\* The other great division is that of the *Hydraidians*, including those polyps which are analogous to the fresh water *Hydra*. It is doubtful, however, if this order can be maintained, most of the species having proved to be but the early stage of some medusa, or jelly-fish.

place also between the fleshy lamella of the internal cavity of the polyp, and this produces the radiated lamella which constitute the star of the cells, so conspicuous in many species.

This secretion, if ever so active, would not, however, suffice to produce those heavy, dome-like masses which are so frequent on the islands of the Pacific, were it not for a peculiar law, which is beautifully explained by Mr. Dana, by which both life and death are made subservient to the purpose. Life and death are here in concurrent or parallel progress. In some instances, a simple polyp, while growing at the top, and constantly lengthening itself upward, is dying at its lower extremity, leaving the base of the coral bare and destitute of any living tissues. The polyp thus continues rising in height, and death progresses below at the same rate, till at last the live polyp may be seen at the extremity of a coral stem many times its own length. The same operation takes place in species which bud and form large groups. In some instances, the summit polyp, or polyps, bud and grow, while, at a certain distance below the summit, the work of death is going on, and polyps are gradually disappearing. There is thus a certain interval of life, the length of which is different for different species. There are zoophytes which grow to a height of several feet, and still only the upper one or two inches are living. The recent polyps at the top of the column are active with life, and vigorous in reproduction, while the more aged below, having reached the fixed limits of their existence, are disappearing. The enduring coral remains, and constitutes the basement or stage of action for future generations of polyps.

But death is not in progress at the base of the column or branch only. The whole interior of a trunk or dome is likewise dead. Thus a madreporite, although the branch may be an inch in diameter, is alive only to a depth of a line or two, the growing polyps of the surface having progressively died at their lower or inner extremity, as they increased outward. Those large domes of *Astrea*, likewise, which attain sometimes a diameter of ten or twenty feet, and are alive over the whole surface, are nothing but lifeless coral throughout the interior. Could the living portion be separated, it would form a hemispherical shell of polyps, in most species about half an inch thick. In some species of *Parites*, of the same size, the whole mass is lifeless, excepting the exterior, for one sixth of an inch in depth.

It is plain that, with such a mode of increase, there is no necessary limit to the growth of zoophytes. The rising col-

umn or dome may grow upward indefinitely, until it nears the surface of the sea, when death ensues simply from exposure, and not from any failure in its power of life. We may conceive, however, that if the land supporting the growing coral were very gradually sinking, the upward increase of the coral might continue without limit. There are thus sufficient means provided for the production of coral material for islands however numerous, and there is no exaggeration in saying that these humble ministers of creative power might, without other attributes than those they now possess, have even laid the foundation of continents and covered them with mountain ranges.

Now it may be asked, what prevents these coral stems and trunks from decay when deprived of that power of resistance which life gives ? What protects them against the wearing and destructive action of the winds and waves, and thus prevents the destruction of a large part of the living zoophytes which grow upon the skeletons of their ancestors ? Mr. Dana informs us that, by a beautiful provision of nature, the dead surfaces become the resting-place of numberless small incrusting species of polyps, which, like lichens, spread over the coral and prevent it from being destroyed by the dissolving action of the waters, when deprived of life, and from the wear of the waves. Some of these incrusting species, the Nullipores, for instance, are said to grow at the same rate with the advance of death in the zoophyte, so as to keep themselves up to the very limit of the living part. Even the debris of the corals become subservient to this great end — the preservation of the dead coral ; for they settle into the many crevices among the dead trunks and fill up the intervals, which are often large, between the scattered coral groups, and by this combined action of living growth and detrital accumulation, a solid rock basement is formed and kept in constant increase.

If we were to judge of the structure of the coral reefs merely from the specimens of coral which we see in our museums, we might infer that they must be a very porous and easily decomposable rock. Such, however, is not the case. The coral reefs, especially those of the Pacific, are generally very compact ; no matter if made of erect corals with the intervals filled in by reef-debris, as is the case mostly with the inner reefs, or of a coral conglomerate, or, what is more common, if composed of a fine and hard white limestone of homogeneous texture. The compactness of the coral rock in each of these cases is owing to the same process, a cementing by means of the finely

triturated coral substance, which being suspended in the water is either deposited in the interstices of the coral, or accumulated in strata and cemented by being alternately moistened and dried by the action of recurring tides. And, as the debris of the corals are constantly wearing out under the influence of the waves, there is a constant supply of these fine materials. Those reefs which are absolutely homogeneous must be supposed to have been deposited as a very fine mud, in sheltered places, and consolidated afterwards. There are, indeed, mud-like deposits to be seen about many coral reefs, but, like the mud deposits (flats) of our own coast, they are found chiefly in the sheltered places, such as the channels or lagoons. It has been supposed, by Mr. Darwin, and others, that this fine calcareous mud might be derived partly from Holothurias and fishes, which are said to browse on the living zoophyte; but this supposition, according to Mr. Dana, is by no means adequate to the supply, and, if these animals play a part at all, it can be but a very subordinate one.

There is another difficulty connected with the inquiry, which we deem of more consequence for the geologist, namely — the fact that the most homogeneous coral rock should occur mainly in the *outer reef*, where the least shelter is to be expected. We have vainly looked for an explanation of this circumstance, and should be happy if these remarks should call forth a satisfactory solution of the problem.

Darwin suggested farther, that the coral mud of the lagoon might be a fit material for the formation of chalk. This supposition, although very probable at first view, is objected to by Mr. Dana, on the ground that in ordinary instances the mud, instead of becoming chalk, solidifies into compact limestone. The question then arises, what conditions are required to produce chalk?

As it appears there is, in the whole Pacific, but one instance known of a chalk-like deposit, and this is not found on any of the coral islands, but in the elevated reef of Oahu, one of the Sandwich Islands, and from its position at the foot of an extinct volcano, Mr. Dana seems inclined to ascribe it to the influence of heat, (some hot spring, for instance,) by which the waters might have been kept at a higher temperature than in the surrounding sea; and, since heated water dissolves lime much less readily than cold, this might be a reason for its inferior hardness and earthy structure. Without questioning the validity of the explanation in this particular case, we hardly

think that it could apply to those deposits of white chalk which are so extensive in some parts of Europe; for it would meet here with the same objection which Mr. Dana made to the production of coral mud by fishes, namely, of inadequacy.

The circumstance that coral reefs occur mainly within the tropics, indicates sufficiently to what degree they are dependent upon temperature. From a general survey of the facts, it appears that reef-forming species are not met with when the winter temperature remains for any considerable time below  $63^{\circ}$ , though in some places the thermometer may occasionally sink to  $64^{\circ}$ , or even lower. If we were therefore to trace, on each side of the equator, a line across the ocean touching all those points where the temperature falls lower than this, we should circumscribe an area which would include all the growing reefs of the world. With the exception of the Bermudas, (which owe their higher temperature to the vicinity of the Gulf Stream,) this area would extend in the northern hemisphere to near the 28th degree of latitude.

A similar limitation may be traced as regards the depth at which reef-building corals live. It was formerly believed that corals might grow at all depths. This view, however, has since proved to be erroneous. According to Quai and Gaimard, they are most abundant between five and six fathoms, and Darwin states that they do not generally extend beyond twenty fathoms. Ehrenberg did not find them lower than six fathoms, in the Red Sea. The observations of the Exploring Expedition tend to confirm, in every respect, these views with regard to the comparatively small depths in which the coral animals can exist. It is stated by Mr. Dana that, among the Fejee Islands, the extent of coral-reef grounds surveyed was many hundreds of square miles, and that throughout this region, as well as among the reefs of the Navigator Islands, and others of the Society group, no evidence was obtained of corals living at a greater depth than fifteen or twenty fathoms.

The surface of the coral reefs is not, as might be supposed, entirely covered with a growth of living coral, although the term *coral-garden*, which Mr. Dana proposes to replace by that of *coral-plantation*, would seem to convey this idea. The following is the picturesque, and, as we do not doubt, faithful description given by our author:—

"Like a spot of wild land, covered in some parts with varied shrubbery, in other parts bearing only occasional tufts of vegetation over barren plains of sand, here a clump of saplings, and

there a carpet of variously colored flowers — such is the coral plantation. Numerous kinds of zoophytes grow scattered over the surface, like the vegetation of the land : there are large areas, that bear nothing, and others that are thickly overgrown. There is no greensward to the landscape, and here the comparison fails. Sand and fragments fill up the bare intervals between the flowering tufts : or, when the zoophytes are crowded, there are deep holes among the stony stems and folia, that seem as if formed among the aggregated roots of the living corals."

Some disappointment is experienced by many in seeing for the first time a coral reef. But, as Mr. Dana observes, they should recollect that nature does not make green-houses, but distributes widely her beauties, and leaves it for man to gather into gardens the choicer varieties. Yet there are scenes in the coral landscape which justify the brightest coloring of the poet: where coral shrubbery and living flowers are mingled in profusion; where astrea domes seem like the gemmed temples of the coral world, and madrepore vases the decoration of the graves; and as the forests and flowers of land have their birds and butterflies, so

"Life, in rare and beautiful forms,  
Is sporting amid those bowers of stone."

Having thus given an outline of the growth and origin of corals, we have now to treat of their distribution, and their connection with the continents and islands. The very fact that, in the same latitudes, they are in some places crowded together, whilst in others they are entirely wanting; that they sometimes form islands by themselves, and at others merely surround oceanic mountains, sufficiently shows that their distribution and form, like that of other great phenomena, volcanoes, for instance, is not a mere matter of chance, but depends upon certain general laws. Hence, it is important that we should be acquainted with their different features.

The first precise accounts which we possess of the coral islands are by Forster, the eminent German naturalist who accompanied Cook in his second voyage. They have since been investigated and described by many other travellers, such as Chamisso, Quai, and Gaimard, Ehrenberg, Darwin, Jukes, &c. But none have had so good an opportunity of studying all the peculiarities of coral formation as was afforded to the naturalists of the Exploring Expedition, and the report of Mr. Dana upon this subject must be considered as the most complete record in this branch of natural history. The coral

formations are divided by Mr. Dana into two classes, the *coral reefs*, and the *coral islands*, or *atolls*.

I. CORAL REEFS.—There may be seen, around most of the high volcanic islands of the Pacific, a rim or platform, apparently of rock, but in reality composed of a vast accumulation of coral; it is this bank or rim which constitutes the *reef*.

"It is of varying width, from a few hundred feet to a mile or more, and although the surface is nearly flat, it is often intersected by irregular boat-channels, or occasionally incloses large bays, affording harbor protection to scores of ships. In very many instances, the reef stands at a distance from the shore, like an artificial mole, leaving a wide and deep channel between it and the land; and within this channel are other coral reefs, some in scattered patches, and others attached close to the shore. The inner reef, in these cases, is distinguished as the *fringing* reef, and the outer as the *barrier* reef. The sea rolls in heavy surges against the outer margin of the barrier; but the still waters of a lake prevail within, affording safe navigation for the canoe, sometimes throughout the whole circuit of an island; and not unfrequently ships may pass, as by an internal canal, from harbor to harbor, around the island. The reef is covered by the sea at high tide, yet the smoother waters indicate its extent, and a line of breakers its outline. Occasionally, a green islet rises from the reef, and in some instances a grove of palms stretches along the barrier for miles, where the action of the sea has raised the coral structure above the waves."

Some of these reefs are of a considerable length, as, for instance, the inclosing barrier of Vanua Lelu, (one of the Feejee Islands,) which is more than one hundred miles long. The Exploring Isles, in the eastern part of the Feejee group, have a barrier eighty miles in circuit. New Caledonia has a reef along its whole western shore, a distance of two hundred and fifty miles. Finally, there is the great Australian bank, which, according to Flinders, forms a broken line one thousand miles in length, along the eastern coast of New Holland, from the Northern Cape to the tropical circle, running parallel to the shore at a distance of between twenty and thirty, and in some places even of fifty and seventy, miles from it. From the fact that it is straight, and does not surround the continent, this reef was considered by Darwin as of a peculiar kind, distinct from those which encircle islands, and which for that reason are sometimes called *encircling* reefs.

II. CORAL ISLANDS, OR ATOLLS.—The coral island differs

from the coral reef chiefly in the absence of high land within the reef. Instead of a peak or mountain, the coral rim encircles merely a lake which goes by the name of *lagoon*. The rim is usually but a few hundred yards wide, and rises seldom more than eight or ten feet above the water. In some parts it is so low that the waves still dash over it into the lagoon, while in others it is verdant with the rich foliage of the tropics. As in the coral reef, this belt of verdure is frequently broken into islets, thus affording channels through which ships may occasionally pass into the lagoon. Sometimes these channels are very numerous, and in that case the rim may well be compared to a string of islands arranged along a line of coral reef. The name of the Maldivine Islands is said to be derived from this division of the coral rim into a great many islands, *mal* signifying a thousand or uncountable number, and *diva* an island. Indeed, so numerous are these islands in some archipelagoes, that, according to Captain Owen, the title of the King of the Maldives, who calls himself "The Sultan of the twelve thousand Isles," is by no means an exaggeration, the actual number being more than treble and fourfold.

The following description is given, by Mr. Dana, of the aspect of a coral island, or atoll : —

" When first seen from the deck of a vessel, only a series of dark points is descried just above the horizon. Shortly after, the points enlarge into the plumed tops of cocoa-nut trees, and a line of green, interrupted at intervals, is traced along the water's surface. Approaching still nearer, the lake and its belt of verdure are spread out before the eye, and a scene of more interest can hardly be imagined. The surf, beating loud and heavy along the margin of the reef, presents a strange contrast to the prospect beyond,—the white coral beach, the dense foliage of the grove, and the embosomed lake, with its tiny islets. The color of the lagoon waters is often as blue as the ocean, although but fifteen or twenty fathoms deep, yet shades of green and yellow are intermingled, where patches of sand or coral knolls are near the surface ; and the green is a delicate apple-shade, quite unlike the usual muddy tint of shallow waters."

Occasionally, we meet with small coral islands, or simple reefs, without lagoons or mountainous islands in the middle. Sometimes there may also be seen smaller rings or atolls within the larger ones ; and, in some instances, where the reef is divided into a great many islands, these islands are themselves annular reefs, each with its own little lagoon. This feature

seems to be especially striking in the Maldives, where it has been described by Darwin.

The rate of growth of the coral reefs is difficult to be ascertained, depending, as it does, upon a great variety of circumstances ; such as the species of polyp, the depth below the surface, the temperature of the water, marine currents, the strength and height of tides, &c. The general impression is that their progress is slow, and this opinion is sustained by that of the naturalist of the Exploring Expedition. In order to form a standard of comparison for future observers, a slab of rock was placed, by the order of Captain Wilkes, on Point Venus, (Tahiti,) and, by soundings, the depth of the adjoining shoal below the level of this slab was carefully ascertained.

The next question to be asked is, How are the coral reefs converted into islands ? since, as the polyps require to be continually immersed in salt water, they cannot raise themselves by their own efforts above the level of the tides. Different opinions seem to have been entertained among the members of the Expedition, as to this important point. That of Mr. Dana does not differ materially from the explanation which was given by Chamisso. Where, according to this author, the reef is of such a height that it remains almost dry at low water, the corals leave off building. The heat of the sun often penetrates the trap of stone when it is dry, so that it splits in many places, and the force of the waves is thereby enabled to separate and lift blocks of coral, frequently six feet long and three or four feet in thickness, and throw them upon the reef, by which means the ridge becomes at length so high that it is covered only during some seasons of the year by the spring tides. After this, the calcareous sand lies undisturbed, and offers to the seeds of trees and plants, cast upon it by the waves, a soil upon which they rapidly grow, to overshadow its dazzling white surface. Certain trunks of trees, which are carried by the rivers from other countries and islands, find here, at length, a resting-place, after their long wanderings. With them, come some small animals, such as insects and lizards, as the first inhabitants. Even before the trees form a wood, the sea-birds nestle here ; stray land-birds take refuge in the bushes, and, at a much later period, when the work has been long completed, man appears and builds his hut on the fruitful soil.

However romantic such a spot may appear when we review its origin, it is none the less true that, in reality, the coral

island, in its best condition, is but a miserable residence for man. According to Mr. Dana, the natives themselves find this romance but a poor substitute for the bread-fruit and yams of more favored lands. The cocoa-nut and pandanus are, in general, the only products of the vegetable kingdom afforded for their sustenance, and fish and crabs from the reefs their only animal food. Scanty, too, is the supply; and infanticide is resorted to in self-defence, when the half a dozen square miles, of which their little world consists, would otherwise soon be overstocked.

"It would be," observes our author, "an interesting inquiry for a philosopher, to what extent a race of men placed in such circumstances are capable of mental improvement. How many of the various arts of civilized life could exist in a land where shells are the only cutting instruments; the plants, in all, but twenty-nine in number;\* but a single mineral (coral); quadrupeds none, with the exception of foreign mice; fresh water, barely enough for household purposes; no streams, nor mountains, nor hills? How much of the poetry or literature of Europe would be intelligible to persons whose ideas had expanded only to the limits of a coral island; who had never conceived of a surface of land above half a mile in breadth; of a slope higher than a beach; of a change of seasons beyond a variation in the prevalence of rains?"

The greatest wonder of these islands is not, however, at the surface, but in the deep beneath; and if it does not strike the eye, it impresses itself the more upon our mind. It is a well-known fact that the sea is very deep everywhere in the immediate vicinity of the reefs. Darwin states that in the Keeling or Cocos Islands, in the Indian Ocean, at the distance of but little more than a mile from the shore, Captain Fitz Roy found no bottom at seven thousand two hundred feet. Such an island is, therefore, a lofty submarine mountain, rising abruptly from the very depths of the ocean. When this feature was first observed, in Cook's voyage, it was supposed, by Forster, Cook's companion, that the coral animals had the power of building up steep and almost perpendicular walls, from great depths in the sea; a notion which prevailed for some time, until it was proved that polyps do not live in very deep water, and are seldom found alive beyond a depth of twenty fathoms.

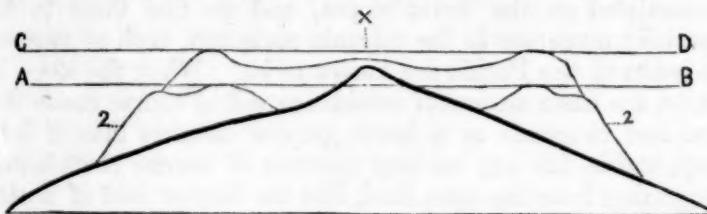
\* The whole number of plants found in the Paumotu archipelago, according to Dr. Pickering, the botanist of the Expedition.

Another theory was then prepared — the crater theory — which was based chiefly upon the form of the Lagoon Islands, or atolls. The circular form of the atolls, each having a lagoon in the centre, and being surrounded on all sides by deep ocean, suggested the idea that they were the crests of submarine volcanoes, overgrown by coral,— the crater of the volcano corresponding to the lagoon, and the rim to the reef. This theory, which originated with the ingenious Chamisso, the companion of Kotzebue, obtained, for a time, general currency, being advocated by Mr. Lyell, and other eminent geologists. In proportion, however, as the Pacific Islands became better known, the difficulties of this view increased, its insufficiency was more and more felt, and, at last, it had to yield entirely to another theory, more in accordance with the facts, namely, the subsidence theory of Mr. Darwin, the simplicity of which renders the grandeur of the conception the more striking. According to Mr. Darwin, the coral-forming polyps begin to build in water of a moderate depth, and, while they are yet at work, the bottom of the sea subsides gradually, from the action of subterranean causes, so that the foundation of their edifice is carried downwards at the same time that they are raising the superstructure. If, therefore, the rate of subsidence be not too rapid, the growing coral will continue to build up to the surface, the mass always gaining in height above its original base, but remaining, in other respects, in the same position. Not so with the land ; each inch is irreclaimably lost ; as the whole gradually sinks, the water gains, foot by foot, on the shore, till the last peaks of the original island disappear.

In connecting thus the coral reefs with the great phenomenon of continental subsidence, which is itself the natural consequence of the gradual cooling of our globe, Mr. Darwin has not only removed the difficulty arising from the depth at which corals are found, but has also solved the great problem of their geographical distribution ; whilst Mr. Dana, carrying the same principle still farther, has pointed out the cause of their absence in some portions of the ocean, and of their peculiar shape and size in others.

The first hint towards this brilliant generalization, Mr. Darwin found in those small islands, standing in the middle of a lagoon, surrounded by a barrier-reef, like a picture in its frame. He noticed that there was hardly any difference between these inclosed islets and the true atolls ; and that, could the small atoll be removed, there would remain a genuine lagoon island,

or atoll. He became thus convinced that no theory would be satisfactory, unless it accounted for both phenomena. Now, as some of these small islands consist of primary rocks instead of lava, it was obvious that they could not be parts of a volcanic cone. The subsidence theory was destined to show that they are indeed only modifications of the same process. This will be clearly understood from the following diagram :—



Let this diagram represent the section of one of the rocky islands of the Pacific, namely, a submarine mountain, surmounted by a coral reef, (22,) rising to the water's edge, (A B,) whilst the summit of the mountain, x, rises a little above it, like a small island in a lake. Let us suppose the island to subside gradually some hundred feet, and the water-level to be carried from the line A B, to C D, so as to submerge entirely the mountain x, and we shall have no longer an island, but an atoll ; in other words, a lagoon, surrounded by a coral reef. If this be really the rule, then an atoll must indicate a greater amount of subsidence than a lagoon with a small island in the middle ; and this again, a greater than a large mountain, surmounted merely by a fringing reef. "Thus the coral reef thrown around the lofty island, to beautify and protect it, becomes, afterwards, the permanent and the only record of its past existence." The Paumotus archipelago, according to Mr. Dana, is a vast cemetery, where each atoll marks the site of a buried island.

As to the thickness of the reefs, there are no means of ascertaining it, in an atoll, except by direct sounding, which, as may be expected, is not an easy matter. In the case of an island surrounded by a barrier reef, like that of the above diagram, it may, however, be inferred approximately on the assumption that the slope of the island on which the reef is based is the same below as above water.

Mr. Darwin inferred, on this assumption, that some of the coral reefs of the Gambier group, at their outer limits, are at least two thousand feet in thickness. We ought not, however, to

rely too implicitly upon this correspondence of the slopes above and below water, for it is a well-ascertained fact, that mountains in general are steeper towards their summit than at their base. Whoever has ascended Mount Washington, or any of the peaks of the Green Mountains, must have found that the slope increases in proportion as we come near the summit. This is owing chiefly to the fact that the debris are mostly accumulated on the lower slopes, and we find them to be especially numerous in the volcanic mountain, such as most of the peaks of the Pacific are known to be. When the slope is gentle, the same amount of subsidence will of course cause the coral reef to recede to a much greater distance than if it is steep, and in this way we may conceive of barrier reefs being many miles from the main land, like the barrier reef of north-eastern Australia. As a general rule, however, it may be admitted that those reefs which are the farthest from the land imply the greatest amount of subsidence.

Those of our readers who are familiar with the result of modern geological investigations, will not consider it by any means an improbable assumption that extensive changes in the relative level of land and sea should have taken place, a theory which seems to be demanded by the form and position of the coral islands. To be sure, we are accustomed instinctively to consider the land as the emblem of solidity, and hence our surprise at the idea that it should be otherwise. But the observations made in Sweden, showing that the whole coast is undergoing a gradual upheaval, the similar indications on the eastern coast of this continent, together with the many evidences of slow upheaval during the most recent geological period, are sufficient proof that oscillations in the relative level of water and land are by no means of unfrequent occurrence.

We are not astonished, therefore, that this theory, (one of the greatest conceptions of the human mind in our age,) should have gained in a short time almost universal approbation. Mr. Dana could not fail to adopt it ; and, by giving to it the sanction of his extensive investigations, he has established it on a firm basis of evidence ; whilst on the other hand, as we shall see hereafter, he has corrected and modified those portions which were not substantiated by sufficient facts. Notwithstanding this confirmation, the subsidence theory has still some opponents, among them Captain Wilkes himself. With all due regard for the great abilities of the distinguished head of the Exploring Expedition, and although we are ready to acknowl-

edge that, in some particulars, the structure of the coral reefs requires farther examination, yet we cannot admit that the objection made by him, to the theory in question, will at all weaken the arguments of Messrs. Darwin and Dana. Least of all can we agree with him, when he puts his dissent on the ground "that it seems almost absurd to suppose that these immense banks have been raised by the exertions of a minute animal." To a geologist, no more powerful agency will seem requisite than that of such apparently insignificant causes.

It follows, as a consequence of the above-mentioned theory, that coral reefs of any description, no matter if in the form of lagoon islands, encircling or barrier reefs, are indications of subsidence, whilst skirting reefs and uplifted banks of shells and corals furnish evidence of upheavals. Applying this principle to the Pacific and Indian seas, Mr. Darwin has divided them into several areas of subsidence and elevation. Thus, commencing with the western shores of South America, he finds in its upraised banks of marine shells undoubted proof of upheaval. Proceeding, westward there is first a deep ocean without islands, until we come to the archipelagoes of the Society Islands, which include many atolls and encircled islands, and constitute, therefore, an area of subsidence more than four thousand miles in extent. Farther west are the New Hebrides, Solomon and New Ireland, which are supposed to indicate another area of upheaval. Again, to the westward of the New Hebrides, we reach the encircling reef of New Caledonia and the great Australian barrier, which implies a second area of subsidence.

Mr. Dana, whilst adopting the same general principle, applies it in a somewhat different, and, as we think, more philosophical manner. He looks at the changes of level, not merely in their opposition to each other, as subsidence and elevation; but, viewing them with an eye accustomed to regard the operations of nature in their relation to time, in their chronological perspective, so to speak, he distinguishes several successive phases in the history of the changes of level, namely: 1. A general epoch of subsidence, indicated by the atolls and barrier reefs. 2. Elevations during more recent periods, and partly during the same epoch of subsidence. 3. Changes of level anterior to the atoll subsidence, and the growth of recent corals.

As to the subsidence indicated by atolls, it is stated that if a line be drawn from Pitcairn's Island, the southernmost of

the Paumotu archipelago, by the Gambier group, the north of the Society group and the Solomon Islands, to the Pelews, it will mark the boundary between the atolls and the high islands of the Pacific ; the former lying to the north of the line, and the latter to the south. Now, if it be true that atolls afford evidence of a greater subsidence than barrier or encircling reefs, we may infer, from their preponderance in the immediate vicinity of the above line, and their entire absence farther south, that the subsidence was relatively inconsiderable along the said line, and went on decreasing from thence southward, attaining its maximum north of the line where atolls universally prevail. Now it is a fact well worthy of notice, that to the north of these very islands, which are supposed to indicate a greater amount of subsidence, (Paumotu and Gambier group,) there is a wide blank of ocean, twenty degrees in breadth, which is without an island. This area lies between the Sandwich, the Fanning, and the Marquesas, and stretches far to the northwest. Considering it to be an established fact that the atolls decrease in size in consequence of continued subsidence, and at last disappear entirely, Mr. Dana asks if it would not be sufficient, in order to explain the above blank, merely to suppose that the same subsidence which reduced the size of the islands to mere patches of reef, continued increasing northward, and thus caused the total disappearance of islands that once existed over this part of the ocean ? It would follow, therefore, if the premises are true, that the subsidence increased from the south to the northward, or northeastward, and was greatest between the Samoan and Hawaiian or Sandwich Islands, about longitude  $170^{\circ}$  to  $175^{\circ}$  west, and latitude  $8^{\circ}$  to  $10^{\circ}$  north.\*

A line drawn from Pitcairn, at the eastern corner of the Gambier group,  $125^{\circ}$  west, towards Japan, would, according to Mr. Dana, represent the axis or line of greatest depression for that vast equatorial area of subsidence.

However considerable the sinking may have been in the Society, Samoan, Sandwich, and other volcanic islands, the very fact that they are actual basaltic mountains, tells us that their amount of subsidence must be small, when compared with that required to submerge all the lands in the coral islands, so as to leave nothing but atolls ; as, for instance, in the Paumo-

\* The same rule may also be traced out separately in the different groups, especially in the Gambier group, the Tahitian Islands, the Samoa, Feejee, and Ladrones.

tus or Gambier Islands. One or two, or even five hundred feet could not have buried all the many peaks of these islands. There are now, among the volcanic groups, mountains which rise to all heights, from four thousand to fourteen thousand feet above the sea. We would therefore ask, with Mr. Dana, whether it be reasonable to suppose that, throughout this extensive area, where the two hundred atolls were actual mountains, there were among them none equal in altitude to the mean of their heights ? However moderate our estimate, there must still be allowed a sinking of several thousand feet. Indeed, a subsidence twice and three times as considerable would not be extravagant when compared with the changes of level which continents are known to have sustained. The area between the New Hebrides and Australia, over which the whole surface is presumed to have undergone a simultaneous depression, cannot have been less considerable. The long reef of one hundred and fifty miles, stretching from the south cape of New Caledonia, cannot be explained without supposing a subsidence of one or two thousand feet, at least ; and the distant barrier of New Holland is proof of a still greater subsidence.

It has already been remarked, by Mr. Lyell, what an extraordinary spectacle would be presented if the bottom of the Pacific, where atolls abound, should be upraised and laid dry. We should behold mountain peaks and ridges, composed fundamentally of volcanic rocks, on which tabular masses of limestone would repose, most of them reaching to the same height, that is, to the present actual surface of the reefs, although starting from very different levels. Some of these calcareous cappings would be continuous over an area of three miles, others above three hundred miles in circumference, while their thickness might vary from one thousand to ten thousand feet or more. In the lower regions, between the mountain ridges, there would often be no contemporary deposits, or, when exceptions occurred to this rule, the calcareous strata would differ in their nature as much as the species of fossils which they inclosed from the tabular masses of coral.

From the actual extent of the coral reefs and islands, Mr. Dana infers that the whole amount of high land lost to the Pacific by subsidence is at least fifty thousand square miles. But, since atolls are necessarily smaller than the land they cover, and the more so, the farther the subsidence has proceeded ; since many islands, owing to their abrupt shores or through volcanic agency, must have had no reefs about them,

and have disappeared without a mark, and others may have subsided too rapidly for the corals to retain themselves at the surface, it is obvious that the estimate is far below the truth. In many cases islands, now disjoined, have once been connected, and the several atolls may have been formed about the heights of a single subsiding island of large size. It is plain, therefore, that the scattered atolls and reefs do not tell half the story. Might it not be that the extra tropical areas are almost entire blanks on our charts, merely because the climate did not allow the zoophytes to plant their growing registers upon the subsiding summits of their islands, and that, like Plato's Atlantis, they have disappeared without leaving a sign to mark the spot where they once stood? However, we should be careful not to indulge too readily in fancies which are not sustained by facts. It is an easy matter for the fancy to speculate about the former existence of a Pacific continent; but, as Mr. Dana justly observes, geology, as yet, *knows* nothing of it.

As to the epoch when these changes took place, there is every probability that it was within and since the tertiary epoch. This is inferred from the fact that, in one of the islands, where the corals have been raised over two hundred feet, the species are found to be the same as those now living. Although we do by no means agree with those naturalists who pretend that all the fossils of every geological formation are necessarily specifically distinct from those of the adjoining deposits, and that the creation has been utterly destroyed and renewed at each time, we think, with Mr. Dana, that there is no reason to refer them to a very remote period; and since we do not therefore know of any existing animals or plants found in a fossil state farther back than the tertiary, it is but rational not to carry back the origin of the zoophytes to a more remote epoch, however great the length of time they may have required to build up the walls of the atolls and reefs to such a thickness as we know them to occur in the Pacific.

Finally, Mr. Dana mentions the following instance of a subsidence now in progress, which was communicated to him by Mr. Horatio Hale, the Philologist of the Expedition, who gathered it from a foreigner who had been for awhile a resident on the Island of Banabe, (east of the Carolines.) It is evident that the constructions at Ualar and Banabe are of the same kind, and were built for the same purpose. It is also clear that, when the latter were raised, the islet on which they stood was in a different condition from what it is now. For at

present they are actually in the water ; what were once paths are now passages for canoes, and when the walls are broken down the water enters the inclosures. Mr. Hale hence infers that the land on the whole group of Banabe, and perhaps all the neighboring groups, has undergone a slight depression.

Besides the instances of subsidence which we have been examining, there are undoubted instances of elevation in the Pacific. Mr. Dana gives a careful account, with a comparative chart of all the islands which afford, or are said to afford, evidence of a change of level in that direction. Instances are found in almost every archipelago ; as, for instance, in the Paumotu, the Society, the Tongan, the Samoan, the Feejees, the Sandwich, the Carolines, the Ladrones, &c. But, as a general rule, the elevation is very limited ; in most cases it amounts only to a few feet, and seldom exceeds one hundred feet. In the most striking instance, that of the island of Hetia, or Aurora, one of the western Paumotus, the raised cliffs of coral do not exceed two hundred and fifty feet in height. Now it must be granted that such elevations are utterly insignificant when compared with the amount of subsidence which is to be inferred from the atolls, or reefs. Nor is there any proof whatever that they extended over wide areas, nor that they took place simultaneously in the different groups. Darwin seems, therefore, to have overrated their importance, in bringing them in constant opposition to the subsidence. We think that Mr. Dana has taken the most correct view, when he represents them merely as " minor disturbances over limited areas ; whereas the subsidence, exhibited by the atolls and reefs, exemplify one of the grander events in the earth-history, in which a large segment of the globe was concerned." But the means by which both elevations and subsidences are ascertained are the same, namely, coral reefs. Had there been no growing coral, the whole would have passed without a record ; these permanent registers, planted in ages past, in various parts of the tropics, exhibit, in enduring characters, the oscillations which the earth has since undergone, and thus creations are made to inscribe their own history ; and every body will agree with Mr. Dana, that " there is a noble pleasure in deciphering even one sentence in the book of nature."

As to the changes of level, preceding the coral reefs, which constitute the most brilliant part of the author's theory, we shall examine them in another article, after having reviewed the volcanic actions of the Pacific, with which they are more intimately connected.

ART. III.—*The Scarlet Letter—A Romance.* By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. Boston. Ticknor, Reed, and Fields. 1850.

No author of our own country, and scarcely any author of our times, manages to keep himself clothed in such a cloak of mystery as Nathaniel Hawthorne. From the time when his "Twice-Told Tales" went, in their first telling, floating through the periodicals of the day, up to the appearance of "The Scarlet Letter," he has stood on the confines of society, as we see some sombre figure, in the dim light of the stage scenery, peering through that narrow space, when a slouched hat and a muffling cloak do not meet, upon the tragic events which are made conspicuous by the glare of the footlights. From nowhere in particular, from an old manse, and from the drowsy dilapidation of an old custom-house, he has spoken such oracular words, such searching thoughts, as sounded of old from the mystic God whose face was never seen even by the most worthy. It seems useless now to speak of his humor, subtile and delicate as Charles Lamb's; of his pathos, deep as Richter's; of his penetration into the human heart, clearer than that of Goldsmith or Crabbe; of his apt and telling words, which Pope might have envied; of his description, graphic as Scott's or Dickens's; of the delicious lanes he opens, on either hand, and leaves you alone to explore, masking his work with the fine "*faciebat*" which removes all limit from all high art, and gives every man scope to advance and develop. He seems never to trouble himself, either in writing or living, with the surroundings of life. He is no philosopher for the poor or the rich, for the ignorant or the learned, for the righteous or the wicked, for any special rank or condition in life, but for human nature as given by God into the hands of man. He calls us to be indignant witnesses of no particular social, religious, or political enormity. He asks no admiration for this or that individual or associated virtue. The face of society, with its manifold features, never comes before you, as you study the extraordinary experience of his men and women, except as a necessary setting for the picture. They might shine at tournaments, or grovel in cellars, or love, or fight, or meet with high adventure, or live the deepest and quietest life in unknown corners of the earth,—their actual all vanishes before the strange and shifting picture he gives of the motive heart of man. In no

work of his is this characteristic more strikingly visible than in "The Scarlet Letter;" and in no work has he presented so clear and perfect an image of himself, as a speculative philosopher, an ethical thinker, a living man. Perhaps he verges strongly upon the supernatural, in the minds of those who would recognize nothing but the corporeal existence of human life. But man's nature is, by birth, *supernatural*; and the deep mystery which lies beneath all his actions is far beyond the reach of any mystical vision that ever lent its airy shape to the creations of the most intense dreamer.

When he roamed at large, we cared not to attribute any of his wisdom to his mode of life. When he hailed from an old manse, "living," as he says, "for three years within the subtle influence of an intellect like Emerson's, indulging fantastic speculations beside the fire of fallen boughs with Ellery Channing, talking with Thoreau about pine trees and Indian relics, in his hermitage at Walden, growing fastidious by sympathy with the classic refinement of Hillard's culture, becoming imbued with poetic sentiment at Longfellow's hearth-stone," we seem ready to receive him as the fruit of such culture. When he *descended*, as he would have us believe, into the realms of the actual, and acted his part among practical men, we were not so ready as he was, himself, to submit to his burial, but waited for the next words which should fall from his lips. And we were obliged to wait until the breeze which bore his commission to his feet retired, and swept away the honors and emoluments to cast them before some other willing recipient. And now he comes before us, not only the deep and wonderful thinker, the man of intense life we have always known, but in the new attitude of an office-holder, and, in this guise, gives us his *dictum*.

One word upon this matter, contained in the "Introduction" of the book. However singular he may be in other respects, his opinion of office-holding appears to be in common with that of the "rest of mankind"—the possessors of place always excepted. The mental paralysis which attended his own experience in this mode of life,—which grows out of leaning on "the mighty arm of the Republic," which comes of feeding on the pap of government, and remains after the food is removed,—is, unquestionably, the disease which is peculiar to this locality of the business world. As pettifogging from law, quackery from medicine, bigotry and dogmatism from divinity, eagerness and avarice from the business of the counting-house

and the market, uncompromising hate and bitterness from reform, callousness, in a word, from all the practical detail and manipulation of life,—so come subserviency and want of self-reliance from office-holding. No more, and no less. It is a painful fact that every way of life, whose tendency is to a practical result, becomes hard, bare, dusty, and ignoble from constant travel. Though many men resist this effect, all men feel it; and that power which makes a man an open-minded, sagacious jurist, a kind and honest physician, a liberal divine, a generous business-man, a gentle and charitable reformer, sustains some in the duties of office conferred by party, giving dignity and respectability to their place, and opportunity and experience to themselves. There is an energy which no circumstance can destroy, which belongs to that subtle and defiant essence called character. Life has two results—the development of the strong, and the destruction of the weak; and it is to the latter, alone, that the degradations of practical effort belong. If we run our eye over literary history, and see the intellectual fire which has been subjected to the quenching influences of patronage and place, from Chaucer to Hawthorne, we shall not condemn office-holding as wholly enervating. If we go from the custom-house into State Street, we shall find that office-holding is not the only mercenary sphere in the world. And if we wander out of the region of politics into the pulpit, we shall find that the former does not contain all the time-serving subserviency. To us who live under no rain of manna, the whole process of getting a living is hard enough at best. And he who can make this work secondary to the great life of thought, and a relaxation to his laboring mind, unites those powers which carry man to his highest development.

Of Hawthorne as a worker, especially as an office-holder, we would not think or speak more than is necessary. He has presented himself in this light, and of course demands notice, as every extraordinary man does, whatever be his sphere of action. And even here, condemn the position as he may, we are glad to admire his peculiar genius. From the height of that tall office-stool on which he sat, his survey of mankind around him was clear, just, and penetrating. There is not a life whose daily history, sincerely and earnestly presented, does not appeal to our sympathy and interest. And we are reminded of the strong human groups of Teniers and Poussin, as we read the graphic picture of those old custom-house attachés from the pen of Hawthorne. His appreciation of

himself, and of each individual associate, whatever be his qualities, commands our unreserved assent. The general, the clerks, the inspectors, the "father of the custom-house," are real flesh and blood; and each acts his part in the drama with an interest and an effect which forbid his removal from the group. It is astonishing, how accurately he delineates the peculiar characteristics of his associates,—how delicately and how justly. While we sit and listen with the intensity of sympathetic interest to the effect which each foot-worn stone in the court-yard, each grass-grown corner of the old neglected wharf, each incursion of busy merchants, and "sea-flushed" sailors, each rafter of that old building where the traditions were hung up to dry, each duty and interest has upon the mind and heart of this acute observer and delineator; we grow muscular, and peculiarly vital and stomachic, over the old ever-green inspector,—we are vitalized account-books with the accurate clerk; we are half asleep with the snoring old sea-dogs, who range along the passage; and we are firm, immovable, placid, patriotic, brave, when we read the tender and touching recognition of the peculiar reverence due the calm and silent night which rests upon the great quenched mass of forces contained in the hoary old collector himself. The humor here is inimitable too. The high stool sustains a keen and quaint surveyor, in one instance at least; and, although some might question the delicacy of the personal allusions, we are forced to admire the twinkling good-nature, the honest confidence, the pathetic penetration, which play over that countenance as it takes its survey, and we know no such word as indelicacy as applicable to the result of that survey, for which we are as grateful as we are to Hogarth for his groups and faces. Although, to many minds, we doubt not a sense of spleen and vindictiveness may be imparted by the "Introductory," we should no sooner look for these passions from the high stool of the surveyor of the Salem custom-house, than from the desk of that clerk who carried, day after day for so many years, to his books in the India House, such wit and humor, such affection and touching devotion, such knowledge and gentleness, such purity of heart, and such elegant delicacy and power of mind.

But the office-holder is guillotined, his official head drops off—*presto*—and Hawthorne, resuming his literary cranium, marches out of the custom-house, with the manuscript and Scarlet Letter of old Surveyor Pue, in his pocket. The

sale of the book has distributed the story — we would deal with its philosophy and merits. It is, as we had a right to expect, extraordinary, as a work of art, and as a vehicle of religion and ethics.

Surrounded by the stiff, formal dignitaries of our early New England Colony, and subjected to their severe laws, and severer social atmosphere, we have a picture of crime and passion. It would be hard to conceive of a greater outrage upon the freezing and self-denying doctrines of that day, than the sin for which Hester Prynne was damned by society, and for which Arthur Dimmesdale damned himself. For centuries, the devoted and superstitious Catholic had made it a part of his creed to cast disgrace upon the passions ; and the cold and rigid Puritan, with less fervor, and consequently with less beauty, had driven them out of his paradise, as the parents of all sin. There was no recognition of the intention or meaning of that sensuous element of human nature which, gilding life like a burnishing sunset, lays the foundation of all that beauty which seeks its expression in poetry, and music, and art, and gives the highest apprehension of religious fervor. Zest of life was no part of the Puritan's belief. He scorned his own flesh and blood. His appetites were crimes. His cool head was always ready to temper the hot blood in its first tendency to come bounding from his heart. He had no sympathy, no tenderness, for any sinner, more especially for that hardened criminal who had failed to trample all his senses beneath his feet. Love, legalized, was a weakness in the mind of that mighty dogmatist, who, girt with the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon," subdued his enemies, and, with folios of texts and homilies, sustained and cheered his friends ; and love, illegalized, was that burning, scarlet sin which had no forgiveness in these disciples of Him who said to the woman, "neither do I condemn thee." The state of society which this grizzly form of humanity created, probably served as little to purify men as any court of voluptuousness ; and, while we recognize with compressed lip that heroism which braved seas and unknown shores, for opinion's sake, we remember, with a warm glow, the elegances and intrepid courage and tropical luxuriance of the cavaliers whom they left behind them. Asceticism and voluptuarism on either hand, neither fruitful of the finer and truer virtues, were all that men had arrived at in the great work of sensuous life.

It was the former which fixed the scarlet letter to the

breast of Hester Prynne, and which drove Arthur Dimmesdale into a life of cowardly and selfish meanness, that added tenfold disgrace and ignominy to his original crime. In any form of society hitherto known, the sanctity of the devoted relation between the sexes has constituted the most certain foundation of all purity and all social safety. Imperfect as this great law has been in most of its development, founded upon and founding the rights of property, instead of positively recognizing the delicacy of abstract virtue, and having become, of necessity, in the present organization, a bulwark of hereditary rights, and a bond for a deed of conveyance, it nevertheless appeals to the highest sense of virtue and honor which a man finds in his breast. In an age in which there is a tendency to liberalize these, as well as all obligations, in order to secure those which are more sacred and binding than any which have been born of the statute-book, we can hardly conceive of the consternation and disgust which overwhelmed our forefathers when the majesty of virtue, and the still mightier majesty of the law, were insulted. It was as heir of these virtues, and impressed with this education, that Arthur Dimmesdale, a clergyman, believing in and applying all the moral remedies of the times, found himself a criminal. We learn nothing of his experience during the seven long years in which his guilt was secretly gnawing at his breast, unless it be the experience of pain and remorse. He speaks no word of wisdom. He lurks and skulks behind the protection of his profession and his social position, neither growing wiser nor stronger, but, day after day, paler and paler, more and more abject. We do not find that, out of his sin, came any revelation of virtue. No doubt exists of his repentance,—of that repentance which is made up of sorrow for sin, and which grows out of fear of consequences; but we learn nowhere that his enlightened conscience, rising above the dogmas and catechistic creeds of the day, by dint of his own deep and solemn spiritual experiences, taught him what obligations had gathered around him, children of his crime, which he was bound to acknowledge before men, as they stood revealed to God. Why had his religious wisdom brought him no more heroism? He loved Hester Prynne—he had bound himself to her by an indissoluble bond, and yet he had neither moral courage nor moral honesty, with all his impressive piety, to come forth and assert their sins and their mutual obligations. He was, evidently, a man of powerful nature. His delicate sensibility, his fervor,

his influence upon those about him, and, above all, his sin, committed when the tides of his heart rushed in and swept away all the bulrush barriers he had heaped up against them, through years of studious self-discipline,—show what a spirit, what forces, he had. Against none of these forces had he sinned. And yet he was halting, and wavering, and becoming more and more perplexed and worn down with woe, because he had violated the dignity of his position, and had broken a law which his education had made more prominent than any law in his own soul. In this way, he presented the twofold nature which belongs to us as members of society;—a nature born from ourselves and our associations, and comprehending all the diversity and all the harmony of our individual and social duties. Violation of either destroys our fitness for both. And when we remember that, in this development, no truth comes except from harmony, no beauty except from a fit conjunction of the individual with society, and of society with the individual, can we wonder that the great elements of Arthur Dimmesdale's character should have been overbalanced by a detestable crowd of mean and grovelling qualities, warmed into life by the hot antagonism he felt radiating upon himself and all his fellow-men—from the society in which he moved, and from which he received his engrafted moral nature? He sinned in the arms of society, and fell almost beyond redemption; his companion in guilt became an outcast, and a flood of heroic qualities gathered around her. Was this the work of social influences?

Besides all this, we see in him the powerlessness of belief, alone, to furnish true justification through repentance. The dull and callous may be satisfied with the result of this machinery, in its operations upon their souls. But the sensitive and the clear-sighted require peace with themselves, growing out of a dignified and true position taken and held. It is not the unburthening relief afforded by the confessional, great as that relief may be, which brings self-poise and support under a weighty sense of sin, or the consciousness of actual crime; but it is faith in the power of a confident soul to stand upright before God, by means of that God-given strength which raises it above sin. And this every soul can do, until it is taught that it can not and must not. The spirit of the young clergyman struggled for this right, which his soul still recognized. He was a dogmatist by education alone, not by nature. His crime, rebuked by his theories, and by those religious rigors

which destroyed all his cognizance of his soul's elements and rights, made him selfish and deceitful, while his heart rebelled against such a craven course, and demanded, with an importunity at last fatal to him, that he should become justified before man as he was before God, and longed to be before his own conscience, by the sincerity of his position. After imbibing unwonted strength from an interview with her whom worldly scorn had rendered resolute, he made an open avowal, which disarmed this wary enemy, and gave a calm and peaceful death to himself. In the same way might he have earned a peaceful life — and in no other. Not a human eye could look on him, and recognize the sinner. His secret was well locked and guarded. But all this safety was the poorest shame to him, whose nobility of nature demanded assertion.

In this matter of crime, as soon as he became involved, he appeared before himself no longer a clergyman, but a man — a human being. He answered society in the cowardly way we have seen. He answered himself in that way which every soul adopts, where crime does not penetrate. The physical facts of crime alone, with which society has to do, in reality constitute sin. Crimes are committed under protest of the soul, more or less decided, as the weary soul itself has been more or less besieged and broken. The war in the individual begins, and the result of the fierce struggle is the victory of the sensual over the spiritual, when the criminal act is committed. If there is no such war, there is no crime; let the deed be what it may, and be denominated what it may, by society. The soul never assents to sin, and weeps with the angels when the form in which it dwells violates the sacred obligations it imposes upon it. When this human form, with its passions and tendencies, commits the violation, and, at the same time, abuses society, it is answerable to this latter tribunal, where it receives its judgment; while the soul flees to her God, dismayed and crushed by the conflict, but not deprived of her divine inheritance. Between the individual and his God, there remains a spot, larger or smaller, as the soul has been kept unclouded, where no sin can enter, where no mediation can come, where all the discords of his life are resolved into the most delicious harmonies, and his whole existence becomes illuminated by a divine intelligence. Sorrow and sin reveal this spot to all men — as, through death, we are born to an immortal life. They reveal what beliefs and dogmas becloud and darken. They produce that intense consciousness, with-

out which virtue can not rise above innocence. They are the toil and trial which give strength and wisdom, and which, like all other toil, produce weariness and fainting and death, if pursued beyond the limit where reaction and the invigorating process begin. We can not think with too much awe upon the temptations and trials which beset the powerful. The solemn gloom which shuts down over a mighty nature, during the struggle, which it recognizes with vivid sense, between its demon and its divinity, is like that fearful night in which no star appears to relieve the murky darkness. And yet, from such a night as this, and from no other, the grandeur of virtue has risen to beautify and warm and bless the broad universe of human hearts, and to make the whole spiritual creation blossom like the rose. The Temptation and Gethsemane,—these are the miracles which have redeemed mankind.

Thus it stands with the individual and his soul. With himself and society come up other obligations, other influences, other laws. The tribunal before which he stands as a social being cannot be disregarded with impunity. The effects of education and of inheritance cling around us with the tenacity of living fibres of our own bodies, and they govern, with closest intimacy, the estimate of deeds which constitute the catalogue of vice and virtue, and which in their commission elevate or depress our spiritual condition.

We doubt if there is a stronger element in our natures than that which forbids our resisting with impunity surrounding social institutions. However much we may gain in the attempt, it is always attended with some loss. The reverence which enhanced so beautifully the purity and innocence of childhood, often receives its death-blow from that very wisdom out of which comes our mature virtue. Those abstractions whose foundation is the universe, and without an apprehension of which we may go handcuffed and fettered through life, may draw us away from the devotion which deepened and gilded the narrow world in which we were strong by belief alone. The institutions in which we were born controlled in a great degree the mental condition of our parents, as surrounding nature did their physical, and we owe to these two classes of internal and external operations the characters we inherit. An attack, therefore, upon these institutions, affects us to a certain degree as if we were warring against ourselves. Reason and conscience, and our sublimest sense of duty, may call us to the work of reform,—instinct resists. And the

nervous energy called for in the struggle is felt through our whole frames with a convulsive influence, while our children seem to have been born with the spirit of unrest. That harmonious calm, out of which alone healthy creations can arise, appeals to all man's interests, even when the quiet sky he is admiring overhangs an ill-cultivated and sterile field. As he puts in his ploughshare for the upturning of the first furrow, he looks over the expanse which the rest of ages has sanctified, and sighs a farewell to the failure of the past, and a sad and sorrowful welcome to the toil and doubt and undeveloped promise of the future.

This law of our nature, which applies to the well-directed and honest efforts of good progressive intentions, applies also to misguided and sinful actions. The stormy life of the erring mother affords no rest for the healthy development of her embryonic child. It amounts to but little for her to say, with Hester Prynne, "what we did had a consecration of its own," unless that consecration produces a heavenly calm, as if all nature joined in harmony. Pearl, that wild and fiery little elf, born of love, was also born of conflict; and had the accountability of its parents extended no farther than the confines of this world, the prospective debt due this offspring involved fearful responsibilities. How vividly this little child typified all their startled instincts, their convulsive efforts in life and thought, their isolation, and their self-inflicted contest with and distrust of all mankind. Arthur Dimmesdale, shrinking from intimate contact and intercourse with his child, shrank from a visible and tangible representation of the actual life which his guilty love had created for himself and Hester Prynne; — love, guilty, because, secured as it may have been to them, it drove them violently from the moral centre around which they revolved.

We have seen that this was most especially the case with the man who was bound and labelled the puritan clergyman; that he had raised a storm in his own heavens which he could not quell, and had cast the whirlwind over the life of his own child. How was it with Hester Prynne?

On this beautiful and luxuriant woman, we see the effect of open conviction of sin, and the continued galling punishment. The heroic traits awakened in her character by her position were the great self-sustaining properties of woman, which, in tribulation and perplexity, elevate her so far above man. The sullen defiance in her, was imparted to her by

society. Without, she met only ignominy, scorn, banishment, a shameful brand. Within, the deep and sacred love for which she was suffering martyrdom,—for her crime was thus sanctified in her own apprehension,—was turned into a store of perplexity, distrust, and madness, which darkened all her heavens. Little Pearl was a token more scarlet than the scarlet letter of her guilt; for the child, with a birth presided over by the most intense conflict of love and fear in the mother's heart, nourished at a breast swelling with anguish, and surrounded with burning marks of its mother's shame in its daily life, developed day by day into a void little demon perched upon the most sacred horn of the mother's altar. Even this child, whose young, plastic nature caught the impress which surrounding circumstances most naturally gave, bewildered and maddened her. The pledge of love which God had given her, seemed perverted into an emblem of hate. And yet how patiently and courageously she labored on, bearing her burthen the more firmly, because, in its infliction, she recognized no higher hand than that of civil authority! In her earnest appeal to be allowed to retain her child, she swept away all external influences, and seems to have inspired the young clergyman, even now fainting with his own sense of meaner guilt, to speak words of truth, which in those days must have seemed born of heaven.

"There is truth in what she says," began the minister, with a voice sweet, tremulous, but powerful, insomuch that the hall reechoed, and the hollow armor rung with it, "truth in what Hester says, and in the feeling which inspired her! God gave her the child, and gave her, too, an instinctive knowledge of its nature and requirements, both seemingly so peculiar, which no other mortal being can possess; and, moreover, is there not a quality of awful sacredness in the relation between this mother and this child?"

"Ay! how is that, good Master Dimmesdale?" interrupted the governor. "Make that plain, I pray you!"

"It must be even so," resumed the minister; "for, if we deem it otherwise, do we not thereby say that the Heavenly Father, the Creator of all flesh, hath lightly recognized a deed of sin, and made of no account the distinction between unhallowed lust and holy love? This child of its father's guilt and its mother's shame hath come from the hand of God, to work in many ways upon her heart who pleads so earnestly, and with such bitterness of spirit, the right to keep her. It was meant for a blessing, for the one blessing of her life. It was meant doubtless, as the mother

herself hath told us, for a retribution also, a torture to be felt at many an unthought-of moment; a pang, a sting, an ever-recurring agony, in the midst of troubled joy! Hath she not expressed this thought in the garb of the poor child, so forcibly reminding us of that red symbol which sears her bosom?"

"Well said, again," cried good Mr. Wilson. "I feared the woman had no better thought than to make a mountebank of her child!"

"Oh, not so! not so!" continued Mr. Dimmesdale. "She recognizes, believe me, the solemn miracle which God hath wrought, in the existence of that child. And may she feel too, what methinks is very truth, that this boon was meant, above all things else, to keep the mother's soul alive, and to preserve her from blacker depths of sin, into which Satan might else have sought to plunge her! Therefore it is good for this poor, sinful woman that she hath an infant immortality, a being, capable of eternal joy or sorrow, confided to her care, to be trained up by her to righteousness, to remind her every moment of her fall, but yet to teach her, as it were by the Creator's sacred pledge, *that if she bring the child to heaven, the child also will bring its parent thither!* *Hercin is the sinful mother happier than the sinful father. For Hester Prynne's sake, then, and no less for the poor child's sake, let us leave them as Providence hath seen fit to place them.*"

Her social ignominy forced her back upon the true basis of her life. She alone, of all the world, knew the length and breadth of her own secret. Her lawful husband no more pretended to hold a claim, which may always have been a pretence; the father of her child, her own relation to both, and the tragic life which was going on beneath that surface which all men saw, were known to her alone. How poor and miserable must have seemed the punishment which society had inflicted! The scarlet letter was a poor type of the awful truth which she carried within her heart. Without deceit before the world, she stands forth the most heroic person in all that drama. When, from the platform of shame, she bade farewell to that world, she retired to a holier, and sought for such peace as a soul cast out by men may always find. This was her right. No lie hung over her head. Society had heard her story, and had done its worst. And while Arthur Dimmesdale, cherished in the arms of that society which he had outraged, glossing his life with a false coloring which made it beautiful to all beholders, was dying of an inward anguish, Hester stood upon her true ground, denied by

this world, and learning that true wisdom which comes through honesty and self-justification. In casting her out, the world had torn from her all the support of its dogmatic teachings, with which it sustains its disciples in their inevitable sufferings, and had compelled her to rely upon that great religious truth which flows instinctively around a life of agony, with its daring freedom. How far behind her in moral and religious excellence was the accredited religious teacher, who was her companion in guilt! Each day which bound her closer and closer to that heaven which was now her only home, drove him farther and farther from the spiritual world, whose glories he so fervently taught others.

It is no pleasant matter to contemplate what is called the guilt of this woman; but it may be instructive, nevertheless. We naturally shrink from any apparent violation of virtue and chastity, and are very ready to forget, in our eager condemnation, how much that is beautiful and holy may be involved in it. We forget that what society calls chastity is often far the reverse, and that a violation of this perverted virtue may be a sad, sorrowful, and tearful beauty, which we would silently and reverently contemplate,—silently, lest a harsh word of the law wound our hearts,—reverently, as we would listen to the fervent prayer. While we dread that moral hardness which would allow a human being to be wrecked in a storm of passion, let us not be unmindful of the holy love which may *long and pray for its development*. Man's heart recognizes this, whether society will or not. The struggle and the sacrifice which the latter calls a crime, the former receives as an exhilarating air of virtue. It is this recognition which taught the rude and gentle humanity of John Browdie to offer such kind words to his loving, and, as he thought, erring Dot, all out of his great and natural heart. It is this recognition which brought forth the words, "Neither do I condemn thee." And it is only when we harden our hearts to a capacity for receiving the utmost rigor of the law, and render them cold, keen, and glittering, by the formalities of social virtue, that we are ready to cast out the sinner. Properly attuned, we look earnestly into his life, in search of that *hidden virtue, which his crime may stand pointing at*.

We would not condemn the vigilance and sensitiveness of society, were it really a tribute paid to the true sanctity of virtue. But is there no deeper sense, which wears out a life of martyrdom in obedience to the demands of the world? Is

there no suffering which goes unrecognized, because it interferes with no avowed rights? Is there no violation of social law more radical and threatening than any wayward act of passion can be? It may be necessary, perhaps, that the safety of associated man demands all the compromises which the superficiality of social law creates, but the sorrow may be none the less acute because the evil is necessary. We see in the lives of Arthur Dimmesdale and Hester Prynne, that the severity of puritanic law and morals could not keep them from violation; and we see, too, that this very severity drove them both into a state of moral insanity. And does any benefit arise from such a sacrifice? Not a gentle word, or look, or thought, met those two erring mortals. Revenge embittered the heart of the old outraged usurper. Severity—blasting, and unforgiving, and sanctimonious—was the social atmosphere which surrounded them. We doubt not that, to many minds, this severity constitutes the saving virtue of the book. But it is always with a fearful sacrifice of all the gentler feelings of the breast, of all the most comprehensive humanity, of all the most delicate affections and appreciations, that we thus rudely shut out the wanderer from us; especially when the path of error leads through the land whence come our warmest and tenderest influences. We gain nothing by this hardness, except a capability to sin without remorse. The elements of character upon which vice and virtue hang are so nearly allied, that the rude attempts to destroy the one may result in a fatal wounding of the other; the harvest separates the tares from the wheat with the only safety. Who has not felt the forbidding aspect of that obtrusive and complacent virtue which never cherishes the thought of forgiveness? And who, that has recognized the deep and holy meaning of the human affections, has not been frozen into demanding a warm-hearted crime as a relief for the cold, false, vulgar, and cowardly asperity which is sometimes called chastity?

The father, the mother, and the child, in this picture,—the holy trinity of love,—what had the world done for them? And so they waited for the divine developments of an hereafter. Can this be a true and earnest assurance that we may hope for the best development there? This imaginary tale of wrong, is but a shadow of the realities which daily occur around us. The opportunities for opening our hearts to the gentle teachings of tender error and crushed virtue, lie all along our pathway, and we pass by on the other side. Not a sig-

nificant deed, to which the purest virtues cling in clusters, has yet been committed, that society has not resisted with the ferocity of a tyrant. Not a word has been spoken for the captive, the wounded, the erring and the oppressed, that has not met with "religious" opposition. Not the first line of that picture, which would represent error in its alliance with virtue, has yet been drawn, that has not been stigmatized as immoral.

To those who would gladly learn the confidence, and power, and patient endurance, and depth of hallowed fervor, which love can create in the human heart, we would present the life of this woman, in her long hours of suffering and loneliness, made sweeter than all the world beside, by the cause in which she suffered. We dare not call that a wicked perversity, which brought its possessor into that state of strong and fiery resolution and elevation, which enabled her to raise her lover from his craven sense of guilt, into a solemn devotion to his better nature. She guided him rightly, by her clear vision of what was in accordance with the holiest promptings of her true heart. Aided by this, she learned what all his theology had never taught him — the power of love to sustain and guide and teach the soul. This bore her through her trial; and this, at that glowing hour when both rose above the weight which bowed them down, tore the scarlet letter from her breast, and made her young and pure again.

"The stigma gone, Hester heaved a long, deep sigh, in which the burden of shame and anguish departed from her spirit. O, exquisite relief! She had not known the weight, till she felt the freedom. By another impulse, she took off the formal cap that confined her hair, and down it fell upon her shoulders, dark and rich, with at once a shadow and a light, in its abundance, and imparting the charm of softness to her features. There played around her mouth, and beamed out of her eyes, a radiant and tender smile, that seemed gushing from the very heart of womanhood. A crimson flush was glowing on her cheek, that had long been so pale. Her sex, her youth, and the whole richness of her beauty, came back from what men call the irrevocable past, and clustered themselves, with her maiden hope, and a happiness before unknown, within the magic circle of this hour. And, as if the gloom of the earth and sky had been but the effluence of these two mortal hearts, it vanished with their sorrow. All at once, as with a sudden smile of heaven, forth burst the sunshine, pouring a very flood into the obscure forest, gladdening each green leaf, transmuting the yellow fallen ones to gold, and gleaming adown

the gray trunks of the solemn trees. The objects that had made a shadow hitherto, embodied the brightness now. The course of the little brook might be traced by its merry gleam afar into the wood's heart of mystery, which had become a mystery of joy."

The ecstasy of Murillo's conceptions, the calm, solemn maternity of Raphael's madonnas, the sterling wealth of beauty in Titian's Magdalens, and the appealing and teaching heart of woman, in all these, come crowding before us, as we rise with Hester to this holy exaltation.

The wisdom and power which came to this woman from the scarlet letter, which society imprinted on her breast, may come to every one who will honestly affix this token to his own. As who of us may not? It is only an open confession of our weakness which brings us strength. The flattering self-assurance that we pursue virtue with conscientious diligence, never enables us to reach what we are striving for. We may perchance escape the dangers which beset our path, but never, through ignorance, shall we overcome the obstacles. There is no more fatal error than moral ignorance and hypocrisy. Bigotry, and superstition, and dogmatism may coil around the mind, until intellectual imperiousness springs up, more pitiful than the most abject ignorance, and the instincts of the heart will almost always be found to protest against them. Moral obliquity may misguide the senses, and the effect is temporary and superficial. Social influences may produce the grossest misconceptions, and, as the circle enlarges, the magic may vanish. But that cowardice which prompts to the denial of error to one's own soul; which refuses to receive the impression that all experience brings, with honesty and intelligence, and, intrenched behind good intentions, feels safe from attacks of sin, is the most hopeless of all mortal defects. There is a false delicacy which avoids the contemplation of evil, and which severe experience may destroy. There is a sweeping belief that vice stands at one pole and virtue at the other, which the deep trials of life may eradicate. There is a want of sympathy for the erring, and an ignorant closing of the heart against those whose entrance would enlarge and beautify and warm our souls, which the knowledge of our own temptations may remove. But no experience, no knowledge, no power, short of miracle, will bring the needed relief to that spirit which will not confess its guilt either to itself, or to its God. The heroic power which comes through avowal, is like the soft and vernal earth, giving life to a sweet

and flowery growth of virtues. It gives self-knowledge, and the deepest and most startling wisdom, by which to test our fellow-men. But is it not most sad and most instructive that Love, the great parent of all power and virtue and wisdom and faith, the guardian of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, the effulgence of all that is rich and generous and luxuriant in nature, should rise up in society to be typified by the strange features of "The Scarlet Letter?"

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ART. IV.—*Lake Superior: its Physical Character, Vegetation, and Animals, compared with those of other and similar Regions, with a Narrative of the Tour, by J. ELIOT CABOT, and Contributions by other scientific gentlemen. Elegantly illustrated. By LOUIS AGASSIZ, &c., &c.*  
Boston: Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln. 1850.

OUR present concern is with that portion of the work furnished by M. Lesquereux, comprised in fifty-three pages, and constituting a valuable addition to our knowledge of the North American flora. A large proportion of this is taken up by catalogues of the plants observed, accompanied also by many interesting foot-notes. We consider all such local catalogues of either the flora or the fauna of any particular section of any country as far more useful than a hasty reader would be apt to regard them. It is true that they are often, so far as names are concerned, merely a repetition of scientific names; still, there are other considerations connected with them which claim attention: such as ascertaining with precision, not so much, perhaps, in every instance, the limits of vegetation, as the soils, or the *habitats*, in which such vegetation is found to thrive. Every aspect of nature points to some other connecting phenomenon, and nothing, therefore, in which science employs itself can be looked upon as valueless. We have presented to us, in these pages, to which we have alluded, what we have reason to think a faithful record of the phanogamous and cryptogamous plants, noticed on a tour to some of the most peculiar and romantic regions of this continent; a record based on a scrutinizing examination of facts presented, and on a plan which also exhibits both strict minuteness and generalization.

Every region of the earth has been found to possess its own peculiar animals and plants. So remarkable is this fact that, in portions of continents, and even in narrower areas, the physical character of those regions seems to determine the structure of such organized beings. Before these natural productions were carefully and even anatomically studied, the fauna and flora of distinct and even widely separated regions, were thought to be really identical. Plants, the most familiar to our eyes, blooming, on the return of spring, near our dwellings, but in native localities — the bold *Hepatica*, with its blue petals expanding under the few genial, sunny days of April; the roseate Windflower, timidly raising itself above the dead and dry leaves of a former summer's glory, which, scattered on the ground beneath the proud trees that bore them with honor, have protected it in their sheltering bosoms during a long and silent winter, and many such floral gems beside,— are so similar in aspect and exterior guise to their co-species in European floras, as to have been considered identical, until more careful inspection indicated a distinction. As we rise, or as we descend the series of vegetation, we find stronger or less strong proofs of this assertion. Of the cryptogames, their habits are more cosmopolitan, and, as yet, so far as we can perceive, many of them seem identical, all the world over. Some of these are, indeed, almost ubiquitous ; and, sustained mostly by atmospheric conditions, are aerial in their mode of nutriment, and, like the winged denizens of the atmosphere, seem to ask for no fixed habitation, but have the widest range, affecting no particular zone.

Various causes have been assigned to account for this peculiarity and this diversity, and among these, many natural phenomena, all comprised under the general term of climate. A review of these is made by the author, and many interesting facts adduced. He considers the influence of temperature ; the power of heat upon vegetation ; the periodical opening, upon its approach, of myriads of forms of flowers and plants. Yet increase of temperature is affected by other agents ; and in countries where the summer temperature may be very great, but following very long and severe winters, the character of the flora is altogether dissimilar to that of those countries in which the mean heat is the same, but under different conditions of the atmosphere. Heat, however, is not the only essential to vegetation, for we shall find, under excessive degrees of a heated atmosphere, a cessation of all vegetable

vigor, a condition from which not even the trees and plants of temperate regions artificially introduced can escape, and while such heat continues they remain as leafless and dormant, and as much in a periodical rest, as the native plants around them. At the Cape of Good Hope, according to the observations of Sir John Herschel and others, the earth, some inches beneath the surface, becomes heated to the extraordinary degree of  $159^{\circ}$  Fahr., and baked to a like extraordinary hardness ; yet, immersed in this indurated and heated soil, are to be found forms of vegetable life full of vigor, and prepared for renewed energy when a more moderate condition of the atmosphere shall succeed. The other essential requisite then is moisture ; when, on its occurrence, new changes in the tissue and internal organization of plants take place ; and, wherever we find these two elements most happily combined, nothing, it is said, can exceed the luxuriance of vegetation.

The adaptation of plants to the variety of modifications of these two all-important conditions is singularly marked and beautiful, as seen in the changes which take place in the scanty flora of arctic regions, on the approach of vernal heats, at those extreme boundaries of phanogamous vegetation. And on the return of moisture, after long periods of intense solar heat, on the other extreme limits. Every form of plant, from lichen to lily, from moss to tree and shrub, greets with its pleasantest aspect this refreshing stimulus to life and activity. During our occasional mild and rainy winters, we can notice, in every rock-crevice, and over our barren pastures, the native musci, protruding their delicate points, destined to ripen into seed-vessels, or else suddenly reviving in ever-renewed yet perennial beauty ; a denial, meanwhile, that "winter shuts the scene." At low conditions of temperature, the cryptogames of temperate zones, in many families of these plants, seem to thrive best ; a rule which probably obtains wherever such tribes of plants may be found.

Nor do heat and moisture, alone, modify the character of the flora of a region, but particular species affect particular districts of the earth, in the ratio that such heat or such moisture is distributed. We have noticed in what manner the periodical return of rains, and their equally periodical absence, influence vegetation, as at Cape Good Hope ; in like manner, frequent falls of rain, or great quantities of moisture in the form of snow, each indicates the style of vegetation in regions where these elements obtain. Nor do we find that it requires

any remarkable strength of constitution, nor a certain robustness in particular plants to adapt themselves to climates which are for months together under the dominion of cold ; on the contrary, protected by deep snows, it is the most delicate forms which enliven the Alpine regions during the brief summers that follow such intensity of frost as must reign there supreme.

Heat and moisture being essential to vegetation, the influence of light is to be considered as somewhat secondary, though its presence, in the majority of cases, is also essential. Some fungi, representing, on the one hand, the highest forms of cryptogamic life, and, on the other, certain algæ, which are not the lowest in the scale of vegetation, are capable of perfect development, even to the acquiring of brilliant tints and colors, under conditions unfavorable to the presence of light. And many plants of a higher grade will not endure the direct light in which most vegetables grow, and which they even require. So that, while climate may have a wide signification, and may embrace a variety of natural phenomena, the presence and variation of heat and moisture principally regulate the conditions of the vegetable kingdom.

In order, however, as it were, to do ample justice to all the agencies which produce peculiarities of organized life, M. Lesquereux elaborates several other conditions ; of which he considers atmospheric pressure as having only a very subordinate influence on vegetation. He thinks, however, that he discovers a difference between Alpine plants, for instance, under a less degree of pressure, and those of high northern latitudes, which, although not identical, yet are similar ; it appears "in the volatile fragrance of the Alpine species, which adds so much to the sweet and soothing influence of mountain rambles." This reduced atmospheric pressure, can not, he thinks, account for the peculiarities of their forms ; for their woolly and warm covering, their thickened juice, or coriaceous juices, indicate the power of deriving much of their sustenance from the atmosphere ; but,

"The fact that many plants, of the highest summits, live very well at the foot of the glaciers which descend into the lower valleys, would seem to show that atmospheric pressure has only a limited influence upon Alpine plants ; but the moment we have satisfied ourselves that the most fragrant of these species never prosper below, we must admit that the relation between fragrance and atmospheric pressure, to which I have alluded above, is well sustained."—P. 139, *note*.

The author conceives that, however intense other causes may be, even when most uniform, the chemical nature of the soil acts, perhaps, as powerfully as any other agent. The adaptation of certain natural soils to the various cultivated grains, seems to indicate this fact; and the fact that such soils are artificially prepared to facilitate the growth of varieties of grain certainly seems to bear us out in this view. This statement, applied to most plants, will not be found to be true, as it is well known that the cultivated plants, in familiar use, are denizens of widely separated regions of the globe, and yet grow side by side, in soil essentially distinct from that of their own climes. But, while much allowance is therefore to be made, on this score, we find in the lower series of vegetable life how singularly the cryptogams affect particular situations.

"The mosses may be readily grouped according to the localities where they live. The *Orthotrichæ* occur, almost exclusively, upon the bark of trees, and upon granite and limestone; the *Phascaceæ* inhabit clayey soils, with the *Gymnostorneaæ*, *Potticæ*, *Funarieæ*, and some *Weissiae*. The *Sphagneæ* occur only in peat-bogs, or in waters charged with ulmic acid; the *Splachneæ* generally upon animal substances, in decomposition; the *Grimmiaeæ* upon granitic rocks; whilst the greatest number of the *Hypnumæ* and *Dicranumæ* cover large surfaces of rotten vegetables. And, if we take into consideration the modifications which temperature introduces in the habitation of some mosses, we are enabled to account even for the cosmopolitanism of some species which, like the *Bryums*, would seem to be less influenced than others by the nature of the soil upon which they grow.

"The examination of the lichens, which attach themselves, commonly, to the surface of woods and rocks, leads to conclusions still more striking. Some species live exclusively upon limestone; others upon mica schist; others, upon various kinds of granite; and others, finally, upon certain species of trees, or other vegetables. The analysis of the substances upon which lichens live, has, if not completely explained, at least led to the understanding of the causes of the remarkable distribution of these plants."—  
P. 140, note.

Yet one other element affecting climate, that of electricity, is to be taken into consideration, as promotive of intensity of vegetation.

Still wider and grander considerations, among other natural phenomena, are to be noticed, which materially decide the character of a country's fauna and flora. The form of continents, the direction of mountain chains, the prevalence of wide-

extended plains, and the presence of sheets of water, should not be overlooked. The manner in which seeds of plants are distributed, not only by their winged appendages, through the agency of the winds, but by the course of rivers, on whose waters they are borne, and by ocean currents, which, washing distant coasts, deposit their burdens at wide intervals, and in distant zones, determines the character and fixes the vegetation of shores of continents, and peoples with vegetable and perhaps with some forms of animal life distinct and distant islands. Besides these, where identity exists at such distances, the character of oceans and seas may affect entirely the flora of other islands, so as to exhibit an entirely different character, even in latitudes parallel with those of inland plains. Every one knows what influence the presence of extensive sheets of water has, in modifying the temperature of its immediate shores, permitting the culture of tender plants under aspects which would otherwise prove unfavorable. So, likewise, the range and direction of high mountain chains, must determine the character of natural productions, as they permit or deny the passage of cold winds from regions beyond them.

"It is obvious, for instance, that a mountain chain, like the Alps, running from east to west, and thus forming a barrier between the colder region, northwards, and the warmer, southwards, will have a tendency to lower the temperature of the northern plains, and to increase that of the southern, below or above the mean which such localities would otherwise present; while the influence of a chain running north and south, like the Rocky Mountains, and the Andes, will be quite the reverse, and tend to increase the natural differences between the eastern and western shores of the continent, and, laying open the north to southern influences, renders its climate excessive; that is, its summer warmer, and its winter colder."—P. 141.

The natural phenomena, which constitute climate, indicate, it is asserted, a certain progress in their action, by the observance of which the character of the natural productions of any region can be surmised. Thus, in regard to floral regions that are wide apart, a certain elevation above sea level, and certain degrees of latitude, will exhibit similarity. Through this general agreement, an Alpine or sub-Alpine character may obtain in northern latitudes; and, at certain heights of mountains, in a very much lower latitude, may be found the flora of a higher latitude. The plants of the summit of our White Mountains, in New Hampshire, represent the flora of Lapland; and in the

regions of perpetual snows on mountains near the equator, we find a flora similar to that of the northern countries towards the pole ; so that vegetation, in both regions, naturally exhibits a most uniform character.

The striking exceptions to this general rule and seeming plan compel us, however, to be cautious, as we are advised by M. Lesquereux, about admitting climatic influences as the reasons for the distribution of organized beings. Certain plants, as the *Cerastium latifolium* and *Ranunculus glacialis*, occur in the Alps, as high as ten and even eleven thousand feet above the level of the sea, notwithstanding the usual limit of vegetation is there indicated at about eight thousand and five hundred feet ; nor does the limit of forest growths, round the arctic circle, coincide with either the isothermal line of 32° Fahrenheit, or with the astronomical limits of the arctic zone. So, likewise, we are assured that the eastern and western countries, within the same continent, show similar differences, even when the climatic circumstances are the same ; and that the same latitudes of northern and southern hemispheres have, essentially, distinct floras and faunas, as seen in the cacti and magnolias of America, or in the strange animals of New Holland ; so that we are persuaded that climate does not account for all those peculiarities in each of these kingdoms of nature, for whose explanation we have called in its aid.

The author, from these considerations, impresses upon his readers his own convictions of the design of creation as evincing the expression of a thought, and warns us of confounding a mediate agency with an original cause. He adduces, as an instance of thoughtful adaptation, the repetition of similar animals and plants all over the world, and notices the fitness of an ancient condition of beings with the progressive order of this earth.

It might be easily premised, judging from the peculiarities of the surface of North America, so diversified by its mountain chains, by its vast deserts, its lakes of fresh water of great expanse, by its varied sea-coast, and its ocean-barriers, that a very diversified vegetation would present itself, if geographical characteristics were considered. On comparing this vegetation with that of other countries, M. Lesquereux arrives at some remarkable conclusions. He notices particularly the vegetation of the temperate and colder parts of North America, comparing it with that of the elevated regions of central

Europe. In doing so, he confines himself to the forest vegetation, more particularly, as this kind represents more fairly that of northern temperate regions. A few families of trees constitute the entire forest growth, and the uniformity of such forests, over that zone in the old and new world, is very striking. The *Coniferae* and *Amentaceæ* predominate. Their distribution is marked; for, as we advance farther north, the pines exclude at last all other trees. In the warmer portions of the temperate zone, the pines are mixed with amentaceous trees, as the birches and walnuts, and also with the lindens and maples, and many other species. So likewise the northern forests are more continuous in this respect, unlike those of the warmer climates in the temperate zone, where may be found several species of shrubs and plants alternating with them. In this arrangement may be seen a remarkable coincidence with that of mountainous districts, especially of the Alps. We notice here a certain series so decided that the author looks upon it as indicating a positive and universal law. A detailed comparison of the northern and the Alpine vegetation will show that they agree, and that, under similar circumstances in different parts of the old and new worlds, there are corresponding species following each other in the same succession from north to south, from plains to mountain summits, "modified only by those influences which constitute the contrasting peculiarities of the eastern and western shores of America, Europe, and Asia." This correspondence and divergence is exhibited in the tabular view presented in the catalogues alluded to in the beginning of this article. By comparing, however, the Alpine vegetation with that of the temperate northern regions of this country, M. Lesquereux discovers that the aspect of such vegetation greatly differs. Notwithstanding the correspondence of species in both, there is yet a great monotony in extensive tracts of our northern forests, so unlike the rapid and highly diversified vegetation of the Alps.

There is a distinctive aspect presented also in the vegetation of the eastern and western shores of continents. Thus the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, of temperate zones in America, are not clothed with the same families of trees; the walnuts are oftener met with in the eastern than in the western forests, and they even thrive here in latitudes where in Europe, there is only one naturalized species growing wild. These and similar examples serve to confirm M. Lesquereux in his opinion that, notwithstanding there may exist a correlation between

climate and vegetation, still, climate and its influences do not produce these differences, inasmuch

"As they are repeated under the same isothermal lines, between the eastern and western shores of the old world, in the same order as along the eastern and western shores of North America; so much so, that the northern Chinese and Japanese vegetation coincides very closely with that of the Atlantic States, whilst that of the Pacific coasts of America and that of Europe agree more extensively."—P. 150.

By a comparison of the present living vegetation of the eastern portion of North America with the tertiary fossil plants, those of Oeningen, for instance, an unexpected and extraordinary development is presented, namely: that our flora and that of Japan have a more ancient character than that of Europe and western North America. We have been accustomed, all our lifetime, to see, in our shagbarks, honeylocusts, &c., so familiar to our scenery, the living types of an ancient flora, bearing an old-fashioned aspect, agreeing, indeed, as we are informed, with the geological character of this region in which we reside, so that we have been actually living on land of antique birth, which was of a respectable age long before other countries had been raised above the level of the sea. The mean annual temperature of the miocene period, it is thought, could be easily calculated from this hint on the part of our flora, derived from the character of our trees and shrubs. Thus also it is plain how dependent on the physical condition of any country are the organized beings which are found in its area; and how, through incalculable ages, the general features of animals and plants are preserved in every new creation, to show that nature is ever true to herself in repeating, under modifications and differences, the results of the same universal laws!

We beg leave to refer, once more, to the catalogues of the species of plants which were observed by some of the party which accompanied Professor Agassiz, and which were collected on the northern shores of the lake. It would appear that the flora of these shores closely agrees with that of the higher tracts of the Jura, and may be considered, in its character, as really sub-Alpine; so much so, indeed, that, in many instances, the species are pronounced identical. The lists of phanogamous plants are under four heads:—

"The first, containing such plants as are really sub-Alpine in their character, or correspond to those of the forests of the lower

Alps. In this list, only such plants are introduced as have true representatives in Central Europe. The second, containing the plants of the lake, proper, or the aquatic plants; the third comprising the plants purely American; and the fourth the cosmopolitan plants, or those which extend beyond the sub-Alpine region." — P. 152, and notes.

In examining these lists, we notice some peculiarities; as, for instance, the occurrence of plants in this sub-Alpine region, which belong, also, to more southern regions: such extensive ranges of particular plants are attributed to the general direction of our mountain chains, and to the form of the American continent, which allow both animals and plants, peculiar to arctic and temperate zones, to extend to considerable distances beyond. Again, the absence of species of the *Caryophyllaceæ*, is accounted for by the observed fact that, although abundant in the Alpine districts of Europe, yet they belong both to Alpine regions and to plains, and are not at home in intermediate or sub-Alpine regions. No species of *Malvaceæ*, nor of families intervening between them and the *Leguminosæ*, are represented about Lake Superior; the former belong to warm countries, and the latter, like the *Caryophyllaceæ*, are either plants of higher regions, or else are to be found in the lower plains. Of plants representing the *Ericaceæ*, several beautiful forms, as seen about the lake, are determined to be the same as those of Europe; a group, indeed, more homogeneous than any other in its distribution, affecting the pine forests, and following them to more or less elevated spots. With few exceptions, the *Amentaceæ* about Lake Superior are represented as the same as the European; while the resemblance of the *Coniferæ* (pines) is so striking as to require the eye of the botanist to be satisfied that they are only corresponding species.

We have already noticed the ubiquitous character of the cryptogams; so identical are the species of equisetaceæ, ferns, and lycopodiaceæ, observed by the party, with those of the sub-Alpine regions of Europe, that, with the same observations applied to the mosses, lichens, and hepaticæ, no parallel list was deemed necessary; the specific conditions of their occurrence in the Jura being merely noted.

Some new species of plants were detected, of which mention is made of a beautiful corallorrhiza, first discovered by Macrae, in West Canada; and several new species and varieties of lichens, as brought to light through the study of the collection, by Mr. Edward Tuckerman, whose extensive knowl-

edge, and whose scientific acumen, in this particular department of botany, are well known.

To render complete this comparative view of the vegetation with that of the Jura and the Alps, M. Lesquereux institutes a special comparison of the distribution of trees and other plants found in each. The series of vegetation on the sides and slopes of mountains are defined with such an accuracy as to enable us to divide them into belts or zones. As the tourist ascends mountain heights, he will notice the disappearance of certain species and the appearance of others, until, by degrees, he is introduced to a style of vegetation entirely distinct from any thing he has before seen. If these features should be represented upon a wide surface of country, it would be found necessary to pass over many parallels of latitude. Such a comparison being attempted, it places at the  $40^{\circ}$  north latitude that zone of vegetation which, in this country, corresponds with the upper limit of the culture of the vine in the Jura. Above this, at an elevation of from sixteen hundred to seventeen hundred feet, begins the region of oaks and of shrubs, represented by our forest-trees and shrubs, so well described by Mr. Emerson, in his "Report on the Forest Trees of Massachusetts." As we travel towards the degrees of latitude where the St. Lawrence bends towards the north-east, we shall find great changes in the growth of trees. Along the northern shores of Lake Ontario, for instance, the hickories, the chestnut, the buttonwood, the white-oak, and the sassafras, begin to disappear. At the height of two thousand feet, in the Jura, and above the region of the oaks, is a narrow region characterized particularly by one or two species of trees, and interspersed with a great variety of ornamental shrubs. Above this elevation, and to three thousand five hundred feet altitude, the beech flourishes; while from the line of the beech to four thousand five hundred feet in the Jura, and to six thousand feet in the Alps, may be seen the region of the pines, or coniferae, which is represented by the forest growth about Mackinaw, where the canoe-birch, black ash, balsam fir, white spruce, black spruce, American larch, white pine, mountain ash, (*sorbus*.) poplars, and low shrubs entirely obtain. The northernmost point visited by Professor Agassiz was Nipigon Bay, latitude  $49^{\circ}$ , where the pine forests prevailed, with occasional instances of ash, maple, and *sorbus*, a region still within the limits of a sub-Alpine vegetation.

From an inspection of the plants growing on the summit of

a mountain, upon St. Ignace Island, rising one thousand feet above the level of the lake, no difference could be perceived which such altitude made in the character of the flora, from that seen on the shores. This seeming anomaly is attributed to the influence which such an extensive sheet of water, as Lake Superior is, would have upon the temperature about its precipitous shores, and also upon considerable altitudes in its vicinity. Such an exception is thought of not sufficient importance to invalidate the laws of the geographical distribution of plants; and by a cursory view of the distribution of the plants of the White Mountains, of New Hampshire, where the climate of their slopes is removed from any such disturbing agency, the zones of vegetation are well marked. Thus already, at the head waters of the Connecticut, an alteration in the aspect of the forests is to be seen; while at fifteen hundred feet above the sea, the oaks disappear, to be succeeded, in a large proportion, by the pines; still higher, at forty-three hundred and fifty feet, the spruces and birches, which compose the vegetation, have become mere shrubs. Above this level the forests cease, and plants, reminding one of the flora of Greenland, and which grow, also, on the northern shores of Lake Superior, are now met with; while at the summit itself, at the height of six thousand two hundred and eighty feet, are found the representatives of the climate of Labrador.

We have thus sketched the principal features of the portion of this work of Professor Agassiz, which is devoted to botanical considerations, regarding it as an interesting and valuable document. Nor would we omit to notice the list of foreign naturalized plants, found growing between Boston and Salem, as presenting some curious facts. The list is a large one, and it shows how dispersive are certain vegetables, how attendant on the footsteps of man. Wherever he has trod, and carried with him the arts of life, flowers have sprung up around his footsteps. Would they were emblems of his mission, everywhere on the earth's surface, in the highest cause of humanity! Along the highways, and over the cultivated fields of peaceful agriculture, and beside the iron tracks of commercial intercourse, where they suddenly appear, coming from afar to designate his presence, may they typify that garland of fraternity and of common interest which shall encircle all mankind in one bond of brotherhood.

**ART. V.—SOME THOUGHTS ON THE DIFFERENT OPINIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT RELATIVE TO THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS.**

I. LET us first ascertain the opinion prevalent in the lifetime of Jesus himself, as the basis of our inquiry. It appears from the New Testament that the contemporaries of Jesus regarded him as the son of Joseph and Mary, (Matt. 13: 55, Luke 4: 22, John 6: 42.) His brothers and sisters also are mentioned, (*οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ*,) and Jesus is called the first-born son of Mary, (*τὸν πρωτότοκον*,) in some manuscripts, and the common editions, (Matt. 1: 25.) In the third gospel, the author calls Joseph and Mary his parents, (*οἱ γορεῖς αὐτοῦ*,) and Mary herself is represented as calling Joseph his father. In the fourth gospel, Philip speaks of Jesus as the son of Joseph of Nazareth, (John 1: 45.)

The genealogies still preserved, in the first and third gospel, in curious contradiction to his divine origin, proceed on the supposition that Jesus had two human parents,—a mortal father, as well as a mortal mother. So, on the side of his father, his descent is traced back to Abraham in the one author, and to Adam in the other.

The Ebionites, who were the primitive Christians, it seems always adhered to the opinion that Jesus was a man, born and begotten in the common way, selected and anointed, and so becoming the Christ, not by his birth, but his selection and inspiration. It seems highly probable that this was the opinion of the earliest church at Jerusalem.\*

It seems that the celebrated Gospel according to the Hebrews, regarded Jesus as a man born after the common way, and made his divinity commence only with the baptism by John; for after the descent of the Holy Spirit it is stated, “There came a voice out of heaven and said, ‘Thou art my beloved Son, *this day have I begotten thee.*’” Justin found this passage in the Memoirs of the Apostles extant in his time,† and it is still preserved, with many other curious and instructive

\* See Justin Martyr, Dial. cum Tryphone, cap. 49, (Opp. ed. Otto, Tom. II. p. 156,) and Eusebius, H. E. Lib. III., 27 (ed. Heinichen, Tom. I. p. 252.) See also Schwegler, Nachapostolische Zeitalter, (Tübingen, 1846, 2 vols. 8vo.) B. I. p. 90, *et seq.*

† Dial. cum Tryphone, cap. 88. (Tom. II. p. 308.) See too Epiphanius Haeres. xxx. 13, and Schwegler, *l. c.* B. I. p. 197, *et seq.*

readings, in the celebrated Cambridge manuscript, the *Codex Bezae*, (Luke 3: 22.)

These monuments very plainly refer us to a period when it may reasonably be supposed that the prevalent opinion among the followers of Jesus was, that he was a man born after the common way, of two human parents, and subsequently became the Christ, the Hebrew Messiah. This is the nature and this the office assigned him. Such is the basis on which successive deposits of speculation have been made and continue to be made. It is no part of our present concern to determine what the Christians at first thought of his history, of his miracles, and of his resurrection, for we limit our inquiry to the nature and office of Jesus.

II. In the first and third gospels, as they now stand in manuscripts and editions, it is taught that Jesus was the son of Mary and a holy spirit, (Matt. 1: 18, and Luke 1: 35, it is in both cases *πνεῦμα ἄγιον*, not *τὸ πνεῦμα ἄγιον*.) He was miraculously born, with no human father. He is also the Christ, the Hebrew Messiah, predicted in the Old Testament. He is called the Son of God, (*ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ*.) He is endowed with miraculous powers, is transfigured, returns to life after his crucifixion, and is to come back yet once more. Such is the highest office, and such is the highest nature assigned him in the first and third gospel.

There is, however, one curious passage in Matth. 11: 27, and Luke 10: 22, in which Jesus is represented as saying, "All things are delivered to me by my Father, and no one knows who is the Son, except the Father, and who is the Father, except the Son, and he to whom the Son is pleased to reveal him." This passage may possibly mean only that Jesus is the complete possessor of his Messianic powers, and he alone knows who is the Messiah, and alone understands the character of God. But to us it seems to have a different meaning, and to stand in plain contradiction to the general notion of Jesus entertained in these two gospels. It will presently appear to what a different class of speculations this verse seems to belong.

The second gospel calls Jesus a son of God, (*υἱὸς Θεοῦ*, not *ὁ υἱός*, except 3: 11, &c., where uninformed persons speak,) but is not quite so definite in its statements as the two other gospels already referred to; but it does not seem probable that the author designed to set forth a distinct theory of the nature and office of Christ peculiar to himself, only to avoid difficul-

ties by silence. The omission of the miraculous birth of Jesus, however, is characteristic of the third gospel, which often compromises and steers a middle course between the Hebrew and the Hellenistic Christians. This omission (as well as the neglect to mention the Galileans, with whom Jesus stands in such entirely opposite relations in the first and third gospels,) was probably a part of the author's plan.

Thus, then, we find that a miraculous birth, with only one human parent, is the deposit of the first and third gospels, the addition they have made to the earlier Christology.

III. Let us next examine the epistles attributed to Peter, James, and Jude, with the Apocalypse — books which indicate the tendency of the Jewish party among the Christians.

In the so-called epistle of James, which is rich in dogmatic peculiarities, and a valuable monument in the history of the development of Christianity, there is no peculiar and characteristic Christology which requires mention here.

In the first epistle of Peter, so called, it is said the spirit of Christ was in the prophets of the Old Testament, who foretold his sufferings and glory ; (*τὸ πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ*, 1 Peter 1 : 11;) Christ was pre-appointed before the foundation of the world; (*προεγνωσμένος*) with his precious blood the Christians are redeemed from their foolish course of life, inherited from their fathers, (*ματαλας ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου*, 1 : 18, 19,) that is, from the Jewish form of religion. He also bore the sins of Christians in his own body on the cross, and died, the just for the unjust, that he might conduct the Christians to God. (2 : 24, and 3 : 18.)

After his death, he went to the departed spirits who had not believed in the time of Noah. He is now gone to heaven, and is on the right hand of God. Angels, and authorities, and powers are subject to him. (3 : 22.)

The second epistle attributed to Peter, and that to Jude, are without any peculiar Christological significance for the present purpose.

In the Apocalypse, Christ is the "first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the world." (1 : 5;) he is the "beginning of the creation of God," (*ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ*, 3 : 14.) He has the same functions as in the epistles mentioned above,— he redeems the Christians by his blood.

Here the new matter added to the previous Christology is this: His spirit had previously existed; he was pre-appointed

before the foundation of the world, was the beginning of creation, redeems man by his blood, is the first-born of the dead, ruler of the kings of the world, and has preached to the souls of men who lived before the flood.

IV. In the four epistles ascribed to Paul, whose genuineness, we think, has not been questioned, — those to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians, we find a Christology unknown to the three gospels and the other writings we have referred to above. As the Pauline Christology becomes more complicated than its predecessors, it is necessary to consider its elements separately ; so we will speak first of the nature, and then of the function of Jesus.

In these epistles, as in those gospels, Jesus is the Christ of the Hebrew Scriptures — crucified, and risen from the dead. This is the point of generic agreement between the Christology of these four epistles and those three gospels. But in the epistles, there appear these peculiarities : The Christ had a pre-existence before he appeared in the personal form of Jesus ; he was with the Israelites in the wilderness, a spiritual rock that followed the people in their wanderings, and from which they all drank the same spiritual drink — meaning, we take it, the same spiritual drink which the Christians drank in Paul's time, contradictory as it may seem ; but the Christ could not change. This pre-existence is taught by the common text in Galatians, 3 : 17 : which says that the covenant of God with Abraham, more than four hundred years before Moses, was made by God, through the mediation of Christ ; ( $\delta\pi\delta\tau\omega\Thetaeou\;eis\;Xriston$ ) but as the best copies omit the reference to Christ, this passage cannot be fairly used at the present time, as an authority. However, a single genuine passage, if clear and distinct, is as good as many.

In 2 Cor. 8 : 9, it is said that Christ had been rich, but had impoverished himself ( $\epsilon\pi\pi\omega\chi\nu\sigma\epsilon\nu$ ) for mankind. Of course, he could only have been rich in a state of existence before he took the personal form of Jesus.

Thus he was not merely a man and Messiah — having had a pre-existence in the latter capacity, at least — but God is imminent with him in a peculiar sense ; for it is said, (2 Cor. 5 : 19,) “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.” By the text of the common editions, he is once called “God over all, blessed forever ;” ( $\delta\;\omega\;\epsilon\pi\;\pi\alpha\pi\alpha\;\Thetaeos\;\epsilon\pi\lambda\omega\gamma\pi\delta\;\epsilon\pi\;$ *tovs aiwvras*, Rom. 9 : 5;) but as the word God is of doubtful

authority, the text ought not to be pressed into the service of any opinion as if it represented the undisputed sense of Paul. However, in passages beyond dispute, he is called God's power, and God's wisdom, (*Θεοῦ δύναμις καὶ Θεοῦ σοφία*, 1 Cor. 1: 24,) and is once called absolutely the Spirit, (*τὸ πνεῦμα*, 2 Cor. 3: 17.)

His resurrection is distinctly declared, but no allusion is made to his miraculous birth, or miraculous deeds.

Such is Paul's opinion of the nature of Christ, but he says more of the office and function of Christ than of his nature. He was the final cause, the scope or object aimed at in the law of Moses. (*τέλος νόμου*, Rom. 10: 4, and *τέλος τοῦ [νόμου] καταργούμενου*, 2 Cor. 3: 13.) The Jews did not understand this, and so there is a veil on their understanding while they read the Old Testament, but it will be removed when they are converted to Christianity.

He is the instrument by which God is to judge the world; all are to appear before his tribunal; he is to rule the living, and the dead. (Rom. 2: 16. 2 Cor. 5: 10.)

Christ intercedes (*έντυγχάνει*) for men with God, (Rom. 8: 34;) he is the paschal sacrifice for the Christians, (1 Cor. 5: 7;) men who were not just before and are not now, are to be accounted just before God, on account of their faith in Christ, and by means of the ransom he has paid, (Rom. 5: 22-24; 5: 18, *et seq., et al.*) This ransom is paid for all men, and not merely for the Jews; he is the new Adam, who brings life to such as are dead, (1 Cor. 15: 21-22.) Once, Paul had been ignorant of this fact, and knew Christ after the flesh, as the Saviour of the Jews alone, but now not after the flesh, but the Christ and Saviour of all, (2 Cor. 5: 16.)

He is the proximate and efficient cause of all things, as God is the ultimate cause thereof, (*δι οὐ [Χριστοῦ] τὰ πάντα*, 1 Cor. 8: 6,) though elsewhere God is the ultimate, the efficient, and the possessory cause of all things.\*

In these four epistles, following their undisputed text, and neglecting the passages where the text is doubtful, Paul goes no higher in his description of the nature and function of Christ. He is a man, born of a woman; the first-born among

\* "Ἐξ αὐτοῦ, καὶ δι' αὐτοῦ, καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν τὰ πάντα, Rom 11: 36. These words seem to denote respectively the *ultimate* cause (or ground) of all things; the *proximate* or *efficient* (instrumental) cause thereof; and the *owner* of all things, whose purpose they were to serve.

many brethren ; he had a pre-existence, distinct, and apparently self-conscious. He is the proximate cause of all things. His coming is the fulfilment of the law, which is now repealed, null, and void. He is the Saviour of all men, through a sacrifice on his part, and faith on their part.

The peculiar addition which Paul makes to the Christology of his predecessors is this : A more distinct statement of his personal pre-existence and function as minister of the Abrahamic covenant, and as sustainer of the Israelites in the wilderness ; a generalization of his function to that of a universal Christ and Saviour, and the destruction of the Mosaic law.

V. In some of the other epistles ascribed to Paul, though with a disputed certainty, we find the personality of Christ goes still higher. Passing over the passages in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which are vague in their character or uncertain in their text, we come to the Philippians, and find there more remarkable expressions. Thus it is said that Jesus was in the form of God, though not equal to God, as we understand it, (*ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ*, 2: 6, 9-11.) He descends from this eminence and receives the form of a servant, (*μορφὴν δουλοῦ*), but has since received "the name above every name ;" all beings, subterranean, earthly, and super-celestial, are to do homage to him.

In Colossians, Christ is "an image of God, the invisible," (*εἰκὼν τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ἀρχήτορος*,) "the first-born of all creatures, for in him (*ἐν αὐτῷ*) were made all things in heaven and upon the earth — the seen and the unseen; all are made by him and for him," (*δι αὐτοῦ παντα εἰς αὐτόν*,) by him, as instrument, and for him, as possessor. "He is before all, and all things continue to subsist by him." "He is the beginning, that in all respects he might be the first, for in him it has pleased [God] that all the fulness [of the Deity] should dwell," (1: 15-20.) "All the fulness of the Deity resides corporeally in him," (*Πάντα πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος συματικῶς*, 2: 9,) and he is "all in all," (3: 11,) the absolute.

The same Christology appears substantially in the Epistle to the Ephesians, which is, indeed, little more than an expansion of that to the Colossians, only the doctrine is not quite so clearly set forth, and there is some discrepancy in the readings of the manuscripts in important passages.

The other minor epistles ascribed to Paul are not important in respect to their Christology, and so we pass them by. But,

in the important Epistle to the Hebrews, remarkable additions are made to the Christology of the early age. Here, the Christ is “appointed heir of all things;” the agent by whom God made the *aeons*, (*αἰώνας*) “a reflected image of his [God’s] glory and stamp of his substance;” (*ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης κατὰ φαντήρα τῆς ὑποστάσεως*.) and sustains all things by the word of his power. He sits “at the right hand of the majesty above.” He is the “word of God,” (*φῶμα Θεοῦ*.) he is the “first-born;” is superior to the angels, and, in the Old Testament, has been called “God’s Son;” the angels serve him; the Old Testament is referred to as calling him by the title of the true God, (*ὁ Θεὸς*.) and his authority is eternal, (1: 8, 9.) It is Christ who, “in the beginning, established the earth;” the heavens are the work of *his* hands. The universe will perish, but Christ will remain the same forever, and his years will have no end. The angels are to worship him, for they exist only for the sake of mankind, while Christ is the ultimate object and final cause of all creation. Yet, notwithstanding this exaltation of nature, he was made a little lower than the angels, so that he might suffer death for the sake of all mankind. In his human form, he became perfect by temptation and suffering.

Such is his nature; his function is commensurate with it. He is a priest forever; by his own blood has obtained eternal redemption and superseded all sacrifices. He has appeared once to remove sin, and will come again to bring such as wait for him to salvation. He took the form of flesh and blood that he might by death destroy the devil, who had the power of death, (2: 14,) and deliver mankind, who were subject to fear thereof. He is the “cause of eternal salvation to all that obey him,” and in all his achievement is the preserver of mankind, (5: 9.) He is a priest, not according to a temporary enactment, but in virtue of the power of indissoluble life, (7: 16.) The old law is set aside, and its priesthood at an end; for there has come a high priest, holy, free from evil in his nature, blameless in his life, thereby separated from sinners, and become higher than the heavens. He is the mediator of an everlasting covenant, in which the law will be that written eternally on the heart of man.

In these epistles, it is plain a much higher dignity is claimed for the nature and function of Christ. All the fulness of God resides in him; he is even called God, *the God*; still, he is man also, wholly a creature, and dependent on God for existence.

VI. There still remain the Johannic writings, so-called, epistles and gospels. The second and third epistles ascribed to John, have no Christological value and require no examination. The first epistle and the fourth gospel represent another addition made to the Christological strata already deposited, not wholly, we fear, in tranquil seas. Here we find the continuation and development of ideas found in the doubtful works attributed to Paul.

But before we speak of the Johannic Christology, we must say a few words by way of preface. The Christians and Jews had, amongst others, this point of ideal agreement: a common reverence for the Messiah, the Christ; but this point of ideal agreement became a point of practical disagreement and quarrel; for the Christians affirmed that Jesus of Nazareth was that Christ, while the Jews declared that he was only a malefactor. The attempt was made by Paul to bring the Jews to attach their reverence for the ideal Christ to the concrete person, Jesus of Nazareth; then discord between the Christians and Jews would end.

Plato had taught, in well-known passages, that God could not come into direct communication with man. Philo, at Alexandria, an older contemporary of Jesus, was of the same opinion. But Philo, though a Platonist in his philosophy, continued also a Jew in the form of his religion, and believed that God did actually come into communication with men; according to his Platonic theology, it must be by mediators, beings between the finite man and the infinite God. At the head of these was the Logos, whom Philo calls a god and god junior, (*Θεός* and *Θεός δεύτερος*.) He found a preparation for his doctrine of the Logos in the figurative language of the Old Testament, and Apocrypha, in the personified wisdom of God (*Σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ*) and word of God, (*Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ*.) But in the Old Testament and Apocrypha, this Logos, wisdom or word, does not appear detached from God, but still attached to him: we think it is still the same with Philo, the Logos is not completely detached from God and become a distinct personality, though this may be thought doubtful. All this has been abundantly discussed of late years, and requires no farther examination here.

In this manner, he found a point of agreement on the one hand with the Jews, and on the other with the philosophers; so the Jew could accept much of the Platonic philosophy without giving up his form of religion, and his Platonic contemporaries might find Judaism itself dignified into a philosophical scheme.

Thus the Platonists and the Jews had a point in common, namely : the Logos, which belonged to the current philosophy of the time, and which Philo had found in the Old Testament. In this way, a preliminary step was taken to promote a reconciliation between the philosophers and the Jews ; between the representatives of science, voluntary reflection, on the one side, and the representatives of inspiration, passive recipients of God, on the other side. It seems the attempt was not wholly unsuccessful; the Philonic doctrine of the Logos had great influence in the development of philosophy.

We have mentioned already the point of agreement which the Christians had with the Jews, and the point of difference. The first controversy of the Christians with others, related to the Messiahship of Jesus. To make out their case, the Christians were forced to alter the features of the expected Messiah a good deal, to make the ideal of prophecy fit the actual of history. This they did by a peculiar manner of interpreting the Old Testament. Specimens of a most remarkable perversion of its language, in order to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the Hebrew Messiah, appear in abundance in the New Testament. The Jews rejected the Christian doctrine that Jesus was the Messiah, and along with it the Christian mode of interpreting the Messianic prophecies. In eighteen hundred years, little progress has been made in turning the point of difference between them into a point of agreement.

The new Christians had numerous points of general agreement with the monotheistic believers about them, and Paul finds an argument in the inscription on an altar and in a verse from a heathen book. The Christian and the Platonic philosophers agree in this, that there were mediators between man and God. But the author of the Johannic gospel finds an important and special point of agreement with the Alexandrian philosophy in particular. He accepts the doctrine of the Logos ; Christians in general might have done so, as indeed they did, with no detriment to their Christianity. But we find a new and vital doctrine common to Christianity and philosophy — **CHRIST IS THE LOGOS.**

This author has two important doctrines to set forth, along with many others, namely : the generic doctrine of all Christians, that Jesus was the Christ of the Old Testament ; (this was addressed to the Jews, and of small consequence to the heathens who had not heard of the " promise " until they were told of its fulfilment;) and also his peculiar dogma, that Christ

was the Logos. If the Jews rejected the first doctrine, as indeed they did, the heathens might accept the other, which really came to pass in due time. We are not, however, to suppose that the author of this scheme wrought with a distinct consciousness of the work he was doing, and of its relation to the thought of mankind.

In philosophy, as in nature, nothing is done by leaps. In the Hebrew literature, in the Old Testament, and Apocrypha, there had been a gradual, but unintentional preparation for the Philonic idea of the Logos, and a similar preparation is visible in the heathen literature. In the successive elevations of the person of Jesus, which we have already seen in the three earlier gospels and the epistles, there was a preparation for the still farther elevation of his person. It would have been abrupt, sudden, and unnatural, if Jesus had been called a God in the Gospel according to the Hebrews; it is not surprising at all in the Epistle to the Hebrews. There had been a gradual sloping up, from Jesus considered as the son of Joseph and Mary, to Jesus considered as the Maker of the worlds, from the man to the God. If extended over many years, the ascent is not violent — it is not *per saltum*, but *gradatim*, that the difficulty is overcome. *Vires acquirit eundo* is true of more than fame. The first life of Ignatius Loyola, published by Ribadaneira, his friend, fifteen years after Loyola's death, records no miracle; the enlarged edition, some twenty years later, contains no miracle. But at his canonization, more than two hundred miracles were claimed for him, and the depositions of six hundred and seventy-five witnesses were used in the process.

The Christology of the fourth gospel is quite remarkable. The author states his design, at the end of what has been thought the genuine portion of the book: "These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ — the Son of God; and that believing you might have life in his name," (20: 31.)

He begins with the Logos: "In the beginning was the Logos, and the Logos was with God, and the Logos was God." These are some of the powers ascribed to the Logos: (we will still use the word in the neuter gender, and speak thereof as IT:) All things were made (*ἐγένετο*) by it; life was in it, and the life was the light of men; it enlightens every man; it was in the world, but not known thereby; to such as received it, it gave power to become children of a God; (*τέκνα Θεοῦ*)

such persons had their origin from a God, (*εν Θεοῦ*,) not from man, (*εν θελήματος ἀνδρός*.) It alone had seen God; it only brought him to the knowledge (*εξηγήσατο*) of men. It was in the bosom of the Father.\* At length, the Logos was made flesh, (*σαρξ ἐγένετο*,) and dwelt amongst men, in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

Nothing is said about the physical birth of Jesus. The author puts his divine character so high, that a supernatural birth would add nothing to his dignity. We pass over the historical and general dogmatical peculiarities of the fourth gospel, to speak of its Christological peculiarities.

Jesus is not merely the first-born of all created things, (*Πρωτότοκος πασῆς κτίσεως*,) but the “only-begotten Son,” (*τὸν μονογενῆ*,) he “came down from heaven,” and “is in heaven,” (*ὁ ὥν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ*;) whoso believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life. (3 : 13.)

The author makes a distinction between the Logos and the spirit, (*πνεῦμα*.) Jesus has the spirit, absolutely, not in limited quantities; (*εκ μέρου*.) “The Father has given all things to Christ,” (3 : 34–35.)

The Christ is identical with the Father, (10 : 30, *et al.*;) it is not merely an identity of function, but of nature. There is a perfect mutuality between the two, (14 : 9–10, *et al.*;) however, there is a difference between the two — with the Father, all is primitive; with the Son, all is derivative. The Son can do nothing of himself, (*ἀφ' εαυτοῦ*, 5 : 19, *et al.*) The Son is also inferior to the Father, (14 : 28, *et al.*) Yet the Son has self-continuing life, (*ζωὴν ἐν ζωτιᾷ*, 5 : 26.) He is the bread that came down from heaven; he alone has seen the Father.

Men are not to be saved by piety and goodness, as in the other gospels, (Matth. 22 : 34–40, *et passim*,) but by belief in him, (3 : 36; 6 : 40, *et passim*;) they are even to pray in his name, (*ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι μοῦ*, 14 : 13, *et al.*;) he will send them the Helper, (*παράκλητος=τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας; πνεῦμα ἀγιον*,) who will remind them of all Christ’s teachings, and teach them all things.

Christ is the Son of man, but he is also the Son of God, (*ὁ γιὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, passim*,) and maintains the most intimate relation with God. He intercedes with the Father for his disciples, and will have the glory which he had before the world was made.

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\* Clement, of Alex., defines the *Κόλπον τὸν Θεοῦ*: τὸ δὲ ἀορατόν καὶ ἀφήγητον. Βαθὺν αἵτινα κεκλήσασι ἵτενθέν τίνες, ὡς ἢν περιειληφότα καὶ ἴγκολπεσάμενον τὰ πάντα.

His disciples are wholly dependent on him, without him they can do nothing ; he is the vine and they but branches. If they abide in him, they may ask what they will, and it will be given them, (15 : 4, *et seq.*) The Helper is to proceed from God, but to communicate the things of Christ, (15 : 26 ; 16 : 15.) He desires that there may be the same mutuality and oneness among his disciples as between himself and the Father, (17 : 21, *et seq. et al.*,) and that they may be in the same place with him, (24, *et al.*)

The conditions of discipleship are these : a *belief in him*, which seems to mean a belief that he is Christ and Logos ; and *love of each other*. The consequence of such discipleship is eternal life, (*ζωὴν αἰώνιον*, 3 : 15, *et passim*;) the immanence of the spirit of Christ and of God, (14 : 17, 23;) his disciples shall be where he is, (14 : 3.) It is not promised that they shall be *what he is or as he is*, only *where he is*. It does not appear that they are to bear the same relation to God which Christ bears to him ; they are not to be sons of God in the same sense as Christ.

The same Christology appears substantially in the first Johannic epistle. However, it is not so fully expressed in the epistle as in the gospel, and there are some minor differences of opinion, only one of which is important for the present purpose, namely, that Christ is a sin-offering, (*ἱαστυός*.) He is even a sin-offering for all mankind, and not for the Christians alone, (2 : 2.) The doctrine of the atoning death of Christ, we think, does not appear at all in the gospel, but is obvious in the epistle.

The passage which we mentioned before, (Matth. 11 : 27 and Luke 10 : 22,) seems to belong to the Johannic writings and not to the synoptical gospels ; but we have no conjecture to offer as to its origin.

We thus see the gradual elevation of the personality of Christ, from the son of Joseph and Mary to the Son of God, with a distinct pre-existence before he "was made flesh," a God who was in the beginning, who made all things, is one with the Father, but still dependent on him, and inferior to him. The Christ in the fourth gospel strongly resembles the Christ in the Arian hypothesis of the trinity ; he is, however, widely different from the Christ of the Athanasian hypothesis of the trinity. The subsequent steps were easily taken, and then Christ was represented as THE GOD, (*ὁ Θεός*,) equal with the Father in all things.

## SHORT REVIEW AND NOTICE.

*Biblica Hebraica ad optimas Editiones imprimis Everardi van Der Hoogt accurate recensa et expressa. Curavit Argumentique Notationem et Indices nec non Clavim masorethicam addidit. CAR. GODOFR. GUILIELMUS THEILE, PROF. LIPSIENSIS. Editio stereotypa. Lips. 1849. 8vo. pp. xx. and 1236.*

THIS new edition of the Hebrew Bible is superior to any of its predecessors, as we think, in accuracy. Numerous errors, found to exist in former editions, have been corrected in this; and, considering the nature of the work, it is probably one of the most perfect books that ever passed through the press. We have not, as yet, detected the smallest error in the location of *points* and *accents*. It is printed on good, white, and strong paper, and sold in paper covers for about one dollar and sixty-two cents a copy. It is a favorable omen for biblical literature in America, that the Hebrew Bible has been stereotyped in this country, and copies of it can now be furnished as cheap, even, as at Leipsic. Any errors in the American plates can easily be corrected by the help of this new reprint at Leipsic.

## CORRECTION.

In our last number, (p. 424,) we mentioned, as an error of Mr. Hildreth, that he said, "Locke maintained that men's souls, 'mortal by generation, are made immortal by Christ's purchase.'" Nemesis is never asleep! It was the critic, the editor, and not the author who was mistaken; for the opinion and the language may be found in Locke's "Reasonableness of Christianity." *Damus petimusque vicissim veniam.*

## THE EDITOR'S FAREWELL TO THE READERS.

THE Editor wishes to announce that this is the last number of the *Massachusetts Quarterly Review*; and, in bidding his readers farewell, he would thank the Public for the favor shown to this Journal, and express the hope that his own labors have not been in vain. The Journal, however, has never become what its projectors designed that it should be. The present Editor thought it necessary that certain important political questions should be dis-

cussed here, and, finding no other hand ready for that work, has turned his own to it, and thus has left many theological, philosophical, and literary themes untouched, on which he wished to speak. He has often postponed his own articles for those of others, hoping thereby to give greater variety and value to the Journal.

In thus taking leave of the public, he must express his gratitude to those, on both sides of the water, who have favored him with their contributions, some of them, he thinks, of permanent value. He has often regretted that the smallness of the Journal rendered it impossible to insert all the important papers placed in his hands. He wishes also to thank those who, at the beginning, favored him with promises of aid. If they did no more, they at least gave him their sympathy, and encouraged his own hopes, which is a service not to be despised.

In conclusion, he will only add that he hopes some new journal will presently be started here, in the heart of New England, in a more popular form, which will promote the great ideas of our times, by giving them an expression in literature, and so help them to a permanent organization in the life of mankind.

#### NOTE.

Complete sets and odd numbers of the Review may be had, at the usual price, of Messrs. Crosby & Nichols, 109 Washington Street, Boston.

#### LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Hilgenfeld, Die clementinischen Recognitionen und Homilien, nach ihren Ursprung und Inhalt dargestellt. Jena, 1848. 8vo. pp. XII. and 340.

Cæsarii Heisterbachensis Monachi Dialogus Miraculorum. Textum ad 4 Codd. MSS. Editionis principis Fidem accurati recognovit Jos. Strange. Coloniæ, etc. 1850. 8vo. pp. 406.

Bibliotheca mystica et ascetica continens præcipue Auctorum Medii Ævi Opuscula. Coloniæ, etc. 1849-1850. 16mo. Vol. I.—IV. Vol. IV. continens Bellarmini de Ascensione Mentis in Deum, &c. Lib. pp. xxiv. and 390.

De Wette, Eine Idee über das Studium der Theologie, &c. Leip. 1850. 8vo. pp. 32.

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